

REVISITING FULTON STREET:  
JOINING THE FORGOTTEN VOICES WITH THE COMMON NARRATIVE

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

JOEL EUGENE COLLIER

MAY 2007

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family.

To my family who made me who I am, I include  
My mother, Alice Collier, My wife, Glenna Collier,  
My sons, James Jonathan, and Jeremy,

To my family that has supported me through this process, I include  
My Parents –in-Law, Donald and Carol LaFont,  
My Peer group and in-laws, Marvin and Barbara Allenbrand, Jon and Karen Osborn,  
and Timothy and Julie Forsyth.  
This family believed in me and wouldn't let me become discouraged.

To the Spiritual Fathers in my life that gave me a taste of Revival  
Reverend Frank Lafont,  
my grandfather-in-law,  
Who encouraged me to read about revival,  
and to  
Dr. John F. Good,  
pastor and mentor,  
Who taught me to seek personal revival.

## CONTENTS

PREFACE	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE FULTON STREET REVIVAL	11
CHAPTER 3: CAN THE TESTIMONIES BE TRUSTED?	49
CHAPTER 4: HEARING THE VOICES OF THE PRAYER REQUESTS	79
CHAPTER 5: THE FULTON STREET PRAYER MEETING: A MODEL FOR TODAY	95
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION	118
BIBLIOGRAPHY	126
VITA	137

## PREFACE

In 1985, my wife's grandfather, Rev. Frank LaFont, gave me a box of books that he thought a young minister and seminarian would need. One of the titles was Matthew Hale Smith's *Marvels of Prayer: Illustrated by the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting with Leaves from the Tree of Life*. I read this book without full understanding, but just enough to get a taste to realize the power of God. Receiving this book from my grandfather-in-law is the inspiration for this project.

Later, I decided to learn more about God, not through the theories of men, but through what God demonstrated. I read my *Bible* more faithfully, added biographies of individuals who claimed to have a close relationship with God, and books on revival. Through reading biographies, I became acquainted with the idea of personal revival, which centered on a growing devotion to God in prayer. Through reading books on revival, I was led to narratives of revival events and the biographies of revivalists. I always felt a special thrill when I reread the narratives of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting. Studying this revival has special meaning for me.

In this project, I am amazed to see how God's hand is clearly working in all of creation. Through many points in this project, incidents have happened that match up with the teachings of Scripture. They are noted in the project. In addition, the first-hand accounts of the prayer meetings exalt the glory of God and do not elevate any man up to or equal with God. The underlying spiritual truth is the almighty God reached out and communicated with His lowly creation and brought them close.

The theme of the forgotten voices, throughout this project, will illustrate the power of prayer, the intimacy experienced between God and humanity during the

revival, and the unity among believers. Although the forgotten voices are a step deeper beyond the common Prime-Chambers narrative, when added to the narrative, the forgotten voices will illuminate the hand of God in the revival.

My desire is that the evangelical community will be encouraged by this project. It is my hope that they will sense a deep need for prayer and their hearts will yearn for revival. May we all feel a need for spiritual refuge like Jeremiah Lanphier and may we experience that closeness of God that the millions experienced during 1857 to 1865.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was amazed at the large support system that appeared during this process. I would like to thank the following for their encouragement; the Richmond Community Church, the First Harvest Christian Fellowship, the parents of Rose City Little League, Grant Babe Ruth, and Madison High School Baseball, The Church of God in Oregon and Southwest Washington, the LaFont Clan, the staff at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Ota Family Tofu, numerous friends, colleagues, and to many people captive next to me on the airlines as I flew from coast to coast. Encouragement showed up in the oddest, but always welcome, places.

I would like to express special thanks to the following:

To Dr. Garth Rosell, whose love for God and God given revival are both inspirational and contagious, and for seeing the importance of my project.

To Dr. Robert Mayer, who made himself available to me, calming my fears, gently guiding me through grammar problems, and encouraging me to capture what was original about my research.

To Pastor Doug Boldt, for your willingness to be my on-site evaluator and for your insights into my research, and your advice to keep the application of my research practical in our congregation.

To my Doctor of Ministry Cohort (2004-2007) for quickly coming together in *koinonia* and scholarship. I am indebted to you for your encouragement, enthusiasm, support, prayers, and love.

To Dr. James Banks for carrying me through this degree in prayer. If you had not approached me to keep in touch at the end of our first residency, I would have felt

all alone doing this research. You are a great man of God and a mighty prayer warrior.

To thank Mrs. Barbara Allenbrand, Mr. Marvin Allenbrand, Mrs. Glenna Collier and Mrs. Alice Collier, for your willingness to help me by proofreading, grammar checking, and discussing the ideas conveyed in this project.

To the Archives of the Collegiate Church Corporation, especially Rita Hollenga for your willingness to work with me and making it easy to do my research and making me feel very welcome in your archives. To thank Jim Philbin, for your willingness to assist me while visiting the archives. To thank Casey R Kemper, for your permission to come and do research at the archives. I would enjoy seeing your archives become the central depository of all information, documents, etc. related to the Prayer Meetings.

To thank Audrey Arendt for your excitement towards my project and all your work getting me 150 year old, obscure periodical articles.

To those scholars and professionals who, through email, gave me direction in my search for original sources. My appreciation goes to Kathryn Teresa Long of Wheaton College, Jonathan Brownson of Western Theological Seminary, Russ Gasero of the Reformed Church of America Archives, and Kenneth Woodrow Henke of Princeton Theological Seminary Library.

To the Richmond Community Church, who allowed me to present numerous sermons and teachings on this revival.

To First Harvest Christian Fellowship, for getting me started down this road.

To Dr. John F. Good and family for discipling me, teaching me about a closer walk with Jesus, and about revival.

To my grandfather-in-law, Rev. Frank LaFont, who thought so much of me that he gave me several books that a young minister should have, especially a book on the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings. Your life was an example of a total life of ministry.



## ABSTRACT

Recognizing that the standard narrative for the study of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting and Revival by scholars and churchmen is almost exclusively found in the combined works of Samuel I. Prime's *The Power of Prayer* and Talbot Chamber's *The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church, Fulton Street, New York*, this study seeks to expand the narrative to include the historical material of the time. This project includes an examination of literature seeking relevant opinions and insights into the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings.

The foundational historical framework for the revival is presented in two elements. First, an examination is made of the historical context of the revival, including changes in the United States from 1812 to the Civil War, focusing on the economic, geographic, political, journalistic, and social elements. Second, an investigation is made of the opinions and concerns of four churchmen of noted integrity, demonstrating that most concerns revolving around the revival were pastoral in nature.

The most dynamic additions to the narrative are found in the periodical literature of the late 1850s and the unpublished work found in the Collegiate Church Corporation archive. The unpublished work provided insight into those requesting prayer, illustrating their urgency and desperation. In addition, the unpublished work provided insight into the logistics of the North Dutch Church in reference to outreach and the logistics of Jeremiah Lanphier in reference to the prayer meetings. The periodical literature illustrates that the prayers of the prayer meeting were only a portal to intimacy with God.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of the Problem**

The Fulton Street Prayer Revival is remembered by some as “the most thorough and most wholesome movement ever known in the Christian Church.”<sup>1</sup> “The meetings abounded with love for Christ, love for fellow Christians, love for prayer, and love for witnessing. Those in attendance felt an awesome sense of God’s presence.”<sup>2</sup>

These memories are often fueled by the testimonies recorded by Samuel I. Prime. Here is a testimony that illustrates God answering prayer during the prayer meetings:

A gentleman said he met a teller of one of our city banks, who felt greatly concerned for the salvation of those three sisters unconverted. He presented a request to one of our Fulton street prayer-meetings, on behalf of those three sisters, from the brother, asking us to pray for their immediate conversion. “And now I am here to say that those three sisters are rejoicing in the pardoning love of Jesus, and are rejoicing with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.”<sup>3</sup>

Kathryn Teresa Long, having done the most recent scholarly study of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, recognized that testimonies exalting the purity of the revival are still used today to advance evangelical interests.<sup>4</sup> She contrasts this with

---

<sup>1</sup> Iain H. Murray. *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858* (Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth, 2002) 332. Quote from J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century: The 1857-58 Awakening* Unpublished MS. np. The writer could not find this quote in the published edition.

<sup>2</sup> Wesley L. Duewel. *Revival Fire* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House., 1995) 129.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel I Prime, *The Power of Prayer: The New York Revival of 1858* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1991) 47.

<sup>4</sup> Kathryn Teresa Long, *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998) 3.

how historians have overlooked the revival because of its chronological placement beyond the endpoint of the Second Great Awakening and before the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> In her view, the revival is in academic limbo.

Referring to the time of the revival, Long writes, “Along with secular press, clergy historians played a decisive role in helping to shape the images that would become a part of the collective ‘social memory’ of the revival, a memory shared even today by anyone who has a casual knowledge of the event.”<sup>6</sup> The clergy that Long refers to are Talbot Chambers, pastor of the Old Dutch Church, and Samuel Prime, Presbyterian pastor and editor of the *New York Observer*. Both are representative of the conservative Calvinist perspective. The secular press refers to the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald*, the *New York Tribune*, and William Conant’s book, *Narratives of Remarkable Conversions*,<sup>7</sup> a work based on excerpts from the *New York Tribune*.<sup>8</sup> According to Long, “Although the reformed clergy shaped the narrative of the 1857-58 Revival for later historians, newspapers told the story to most Americans in the spring of 1858.”<sup>9</sup>

The secular press was not the only source of revival narratives. The religious press played a prominent role as it became part of the popular literature of the day. “The fruits of this transformation—millions of tracts, pamphlets, hymnbooks, and devotional books, as well as journals, magazines, and newspapers of every

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

<sup>7</sup> William C. Conant. *Narratives of Remarkable Conversions and Revival Incidents* (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1858) np.

<sup>8</sup> Long, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 27.

description—represent the flood of print.”<sup>10</sup>

The fruit of the transformation of the religious press looks similar to the fruit of the “revival narrative.” Long states, “The stylized ‘revival narrative’ was a traditionally Calvinist genre. Instead of publishing books on the subject, Methodists were accustomed to recording their revival accounts in diaries, journals, and the “religious intelligence” columns of their periodicals.”<sup>11</sup> In addition, this list includes “*Minutes, Discipline*, hymnbooks, Wesley’s own Works, the normative *Sermons, Notes on the New Testament*, and eventually successful magazines.”<sup>12</sup>

In contrast to the Methodist “revival narrative,” Calvinists viewed revival from a different perspective. A “Calvinist revival narrative” observed the change to a town as it experienced revival. “Just as the conversion narrative traced the rise and progress of grace in the soul, so the revival narrative traced the rise and progress of grace changing a town from sin to holiness.”<sup>13</sup> The fruit of the Calvinist revival experience would include similar publications as the Wesleyan tradition, but would include books of “revival narratives.”

### **Thesis Question**

Juxtaposing the fruit of “revival narratives” and the periodicals published in the late 1850s with Long’s comment that Prime and Chambers have informed later historians, there seems to be a disparity between what was published and what informs contemporary society. Considering the dates of publication of Prime and

---

<sup>10</sup> Nathan O. Hatch. *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CN.: Yale University Press, 1989) 141.

<sup>11</sup> Long, 19.

<sup>12</sup> Russell E. Ritchey. *Early American Methodism* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1991) 93.

<sup>13</sup> Michael J. Crawford. *Seasons of Grace: Colonial New England’s Revival Tradition in it’s British Context* ( New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991) 184.

Chambers' work and the periodicals, the disparity is due to concurrent publishing.<sup>14</sup> However, one might ask, "What new information would be contained in the Fulton Street Revival narrative if the periodical descriptions were included?" Asking this question fulfills one of Long's desires that her work would "stimulate further research."<sup>15</sup> This is what this writer hopes to accomplish in this thesis project.

### **The Research Plan**

The initial method of research will be bibliographic in nature. This process will include an examination of popular and academic literature from the time of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival to the present. In addition, records will be examined from the Archives of the Collegiate Church Corporation of New York City. The goal is to accumulate the pertinent data.

Once the pertinent data is gathered, an analysis of the content must be accomplished. So often, modern scholars ask contemporary, critical questions in an attempt to gather data that fits contemporary issues. The goal of this analysis is to incorporate the forgotten voices of the late 1850s with the common narrative of the Revival, thus allowing the voices of the late 1850s to recreate the facts of the revival, to clarify revival characteristics, and to articulate concerns of the revival.

The final phase of this project will create a model for prayer meetings based on an analysis of the pertinent data, specifically the characteristics of the prayer meetings during the revival years. This model is intended to inform ministers of the successful relationship structure of the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings.

---

<sup>14</sup> The copyrights of Prime and Chambers' books are both 1858. Many of the periodicals start including revival news in March of 1858 and continue into 1859.

<sup>15</sup> Long, 10.

## **Definitions**

The Collegiate Church Corporation archivist, Rita Hollenga, stated that the event in question is called “The Fulton Street Prayer Meeting.”<sup>16</sup> Many contemporary authors use the “Fulton Street Prayer Revival” as the title of the event. Some use both terms interchangeably. For the purpose of clarity in this project, the “Fulton Street Prayer Meeting” will refer to the prayer meetings from the moment Jeremiah Lanphier began them to the moment they ended in the twentieth century. The “Fulton Street Prayer Revival” refers to the period of 1857 to 1859. The difference between the titles is simply the fervor demonstrated by human attendance at the noon day prayer meetings.<sup>17</sup>

## **Limitations**

Since the purpose of this project focuses on combining data from literary sources from the late 1850s, no contemporary sources will be included. The exceptions to this rule include putting the revival in its historical context and the history of journalism, specifically the growth of the human interest story during the early 1830s to the Civil War. These two histories will include contemporary scholarship. The second exception is demonstrating that Prime’s book, *The Power of Prayer*, has acted as the definitive history since the time of the revival. All of Prime’s work will be considered as the extent of *The Power of Prayer*’s influence is ascertained. The third exception is the inclusion of contemporary literature as the

---

<sup>16</sup> This information was ascertained in a personal interview between Ms. Hollenga and the writer at the Collegiate Church Archives on April 18, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that the difference between the two terms is not the presense of the Lord during the revival and His absence afterwards. The records in the archive demonstrate that this is not true. Answers to prayer were graciously received long after the revival fervor ended. In addition, this is inconsistent with Scripture. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus says “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

prayer model is developed.

A second limitation will be in the geographic scope of the study. The Fulton Street Prayer Revival grew to include many cities across the United States and abroad, especially Charles Finney in Boston and D. L. Moody in Chicago. For the purpose of this study, the focus will center solely on New York City.

The third limitation to this project is that not all periodicals for which references were found were available for examination due to periodical deterioration. The deterioration includes the hardcopy, microfilm, and microfiche.

### **Project Results**

The second chapter will place the narrative of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival inside its historical context. During this period in history, the United States was growing economically, geographically, politically, and socially. Unfortunately, the growth was unique to its own part of the country. The North chose to industrialize, while the South continued to be an agrarian society with slave labor. The West, which encompassed Minnesota to the Pacific Coast, were becoming territories and seeking statehood.

As these sections of the United States developed, so did an adversarial attitude between the North and the South. Their antagonism eventually centered on the practice of slavery. Politics intensified as a parade of public events polarized the country. Historian Frank Beardsley describes the period in this way:

The trend of public events, the political agitation of the time, the Mexican war, the discussions and debates over the slavery question, the compromise measures introduced into the Senate of the United States by Henry Clay of Kentucky, the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law, the abrogation of Missouri Compromise, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the Dred Scott decision of the Supreme

Court, all tended so to preoccupy the public mind that religion was largely crowded out.<sup>18</sup>

Economically, this was a time of growing wealth for the United States. With the introduction of the railroad as a new way to distribute crops, villages grew into thriving metropolises and the country's export industry grew. The export industry intensified when the United States delivered needed supplies to their allies during the Crimean War.

The year, 1857, became a year of financial distress. The Crimean War ended bringing the need for exports to a minimal level. The stock market became unstable as financial institutions extended risky loans to the railroads. Edwin C. Ludlow, manager of the New York office of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company, had embezzled funds and had extended too many risky loans so that the home office was unable to maintain a healthy cash flow.<sup>19</sup> This caused a rush on the banks. Many individuals became unemployed and fought for survival as winter approached.

Religiously, fervor for God began to deteriorate, assisted by the failed apocalyptic prophecies of the Millerites. Before long, many citizens of the United States had given up religious concerns to focus on the accumulation of personal wealth.

Out of polarized politics, financial turmoil, and a dry religious environment came the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting and Revival. Jeremiah Lanphier found solace from life's challenge when he spent time in prayer with the Lord. After looking into the faces of New York businessmen, he believed that prayer was what they needed to

---

<sup>18</sup> Frank Grenville Beardsley, *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals* (New York: American Tract Society:1943) 40-1.

<sup>19</sup> James L. Huston, *The Panic of 1857 and the Coming of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge, LA.: Louisiana State University Press: 1987) 14.



find peace during this turbulent time. On September 27, 1857, the prayer meetings were started. The prayer meetings grew from six men praying in the Old Dutch Church to many thousand people praying around the world.

The third chapter introduces the question of whether the testimonies of the revival could be trusted. For clarity, this question is broken down into three issues. The first issue focuses on the concerns of four churchmen of recognized integrity. Their concerns were pastoral in nature including whether the salvation experiences reported were authentic, the absence of a set process of discipleship, laymen being used in pivotal roles during the revival, and the absence of the preached word during the prayer meetings. Unanimously, the churchmen agreed the reporting of the revival by the secular press was from the hand of God.

The second issue examined the placement of the narratives of the revival by the secular press inside the history of journalism. During this period of time, people were interested in human-interest stories. This interest manifested itself in the growth of penny papers that covered a variety of interests. Eventually, these interests were assimilated into the secular press as newspaper editors discovered how to profit from them. Many editors refused to believe that religious issues would sell papers until they took the advice of several individuals and included stories about the prayer meetings into their papers. These stories were reported without a great deal of bias and they brought unexpected profits to the secular press. The newspapers continued to report revival stories until the revival ended.

The third issue examines the concern that a definitive history of the revival was never written since the time of the revival to the present. Answering this

statement, Samuel I. Prime's book, *The Power of Prayer*<sup>20</sup> is presented as the answer to this deficiency. *The Power of Prayer* was widely distributed in the United States, The United Kingdom, and around the world. In fact, in one village in the United Kingdom, the book was distributed to every household. The book was translated into several languages. It went through different editions including modern reprints. This book was used to inform many people of the revival and still is used today.

The fourth chapter will examine the prayer requests of the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings during the time of the revival. This study is unique to the study of revival since most churchmen and scholars focus on the answers to prayer and the visible acts of God in the lives of human beings. Since the Fulton Street Prayer Revival divinely worked through the prayers of businessmen, the study of the requests plays an integral part in illustrating the spiritual condition of human heart.

The examination of the prayer requests will consist of contextual observations made from excerpts of their written form. The requester's spiritual heart becomes evident as the request is presented including the desperation of the requester's disposition, the individual for whom the request is made, the extra circumstances provided to give those praying a better understanding of the situation, and some comment of faith and thanksgiving to those who will pray for their request.

The fifth chapter will glean the characteristics from the descriptions of the revival from the four churchmen examined in chapter three and create a model for prayer meetings. The revival characteristics include: it was divinely given, it was given to Christians, there were humans waiting in the presence of the Lord, the focus was prayer, there was unity among believers, the leaders were lay leaders, the Holy

---

<sup>20</sup> Samuel I. Prime, *The Power of Prayer* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998) n.p.

Spirit was evident, and salvation was through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. From the characteristics, the model is not a “step by step” process or a checklist, but will emphasize a relationship with Christ devoted to prayer and His presence.

The sixth and concluding chapter will concisely address the thesis and pull together the lost voices used throughout this project. Much of it has already been expressed as the other chapters have been summarized. To use a picturesque example, this project is like a one-thousand piece jigsaw puzzle, where Prime and Chambers have provided eight hundred pieces. The findings of this project add one hundred more, leaving one hundred pieces to be filled by future research.

To complete this chapter, recommendations will be made as to what needs to be accomplished in this area of research. This will include a plea to preserve original source data electronically and protect the original hard copies. In addition, it will suggest the pieces of the puzzle that have been referenced in other works yet whose whereabouts are unknown.

Finally, for the forgotten voices to have a platform to speak, a historical context needs to be established for greater understanding of order, trends, and continuity. Without having the characteristics pointed out, some unique parallels, between the late 1850s and today, will emerge out of the order, trends, and continuity. The next chapter will establish the historical framework.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE FULTON STREET REVIVAL

Throughout the life of the Christian church, revivals have played an integral role in drawing the Church back to God. One of the most unique revivals in 19<sup>th</sup> century American history was the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. This revival was not started by professional clergy, but rather through the laity. One of the distinguishing characteristics of this revival was the position of prayer, in which the burden for prayer was divinely given. It was believed that prayer was the fuel that opened the door to heaven for many people and that prayer meetings were the vehicle for their results.

This revival is receiving growing attention today. With the growth of a contemporary prayer movement,<sup>21</sup> Fulton Street is being examined for all the divine truth that can be gleaned. Interest in the testimonies of this revival has led to the republishing of T. W. Chambers' *The New York City Prayer Meeting* and Samuel I. Prime's *The Power of Prayer*,<sup>22</sup> originally published in 1858 and 1859 respectively. The scholarly community has developed an interest through the work of Katherine Teresa Long and her

---

<sup>21</sup> The contemporary prayer movement seems to be a coming together of evangelicals in both charismatic and non-charismatic camps to refocus and retool their ministries in light of God's revelation about prayer. God is adding new depths to human understandings of prayer, placing spiritual warfare, listening for God's voice, discerning spiritual strongholds including territorial spirits, and corporate praise into the mainstream of evangelical evangelism. The interest in the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, as illustrated by Cindy Jacobs, *Possessing the Gates of the Enemy* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Chosen Books, 1991) 68, is focused on the Holy Spirit, in the passage called the Spirit of Prayer, coming down upon and resting on people as part of the beginning of Revival. In addition, Jacobs illustrates what God can do through ordinary people like Jeremiah Lanphier. Other authors of the contemporary prayer movement would include Dick Eastman, Bill Bright, and C. Peter Wagner.

<sup>22</sup> Talbot W. Chambers, *The New York City Noon Day Meeting* (Colorado Springs, CO.: Wagner Publications, 2002) Reprint from 1858, and Samuel I. Prime, *The Power of Prayer* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998) np..

book *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening*.<sup>23</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to place the Fulton Street Prayer Revival in its historical context. To accomplish this, an examination must be made of the geographical growth of the United States in the early nineteenth century in terms of sectionalism and politics, economics, the religious atmosphere of the time, and how each of these facets helped to develop that historical context.

### **Geographic and Economic Growth**

The early nineteenth century was a time of significant growth for the United States. This growth demonstrated itself geographically, socially, economically, and politically. It was this growth that allowed each section of the United States to develop uniquely.

Nathan Hatch, comments that the time period from the Revolutionary War to 1845 was one of rapid growth,<sup>24</sup> due to “high birth rates and availability of land,”<sup>25</sup> as opposed to high immigration rates. In comparing populations between the United States and England, Hatch points out that the United States started that time period with 2.5 million people, and grew to 20 million people by 1845. In contrast to Great Britain, the United States had half the population in 1776, but grew at a rate three times as fast. By

---

<sup>23</sup> Kathryn Teresa Long, *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening* (New York: Oxford Press, 1998) The literature surrounding the Fulton Street Prayer Revival finds the work of Prime and Chambers as its source material from which many other historians built their own narratives of the revival. Kathryn Teresa Long points out a tremendous difference between the work of Prime and Chambers and the narratives printed in the secular newspapers of the time. The revival narrative presented by W. C. Conant (see bibliography) was drawn from the newspaper reports as opposed to the work of Prime and Chambers. Since it was taken from newspaper accounts, Long suggests that Conant’s version would have been the version commonly known to the average citizen. Long, 27.

<sup>24</sup> Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 1989) 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

1845, U. S. population was five million larger than England.<sup>26</sup>

### The North

After the War of 1812, the United States government gave tax incentives to individuals in any part of the country that would industrialize.<sup>27</sup> The American North, already having a merchant economy, quickly adapted its larger cities to industrial centers. New York City, for example, had such close ties to England that it seemed like the natural place to process and export goods and resources.

However, along with industrialization came the challenges of the industrialized society. New social structures were created which included the wealthy, the poor, and the immigrant.<sup>28</sup> By 1850, captains of industry began to realize that the number of factory workers was increasing to the point where they would be the largest sector of society. Fearing this growth, many in the North were concerned with changes laborers might demand.<sup>29</sup>

Laborers found their strongest competition for jobs from immigrants to the United States. Immigrants would often work for much smaller wages and work longer hours than the established labor force. This led to bigotry towards immigrants and this bigotry would exhibit itself in a variety of different ways. Protestants and Catholics often clashed with each other. One ethnic group didn't like another ethnic group. In response to immigration, the American or "Know-Nothing" party emerged,<sup>30</sup> which sought general protections for the American laborer and developed anti-immigration legislation.

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> James L. Huston, *The Panic of 1857 and the Coming of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge, LA.: Louisiana State University Press: 1987) 4.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

## The South

The southern states remained primarily an agricultural economy. “The southern slave states concentrated their business efforts on the agricultural staples of cotton, tobacco, rice, and sugar.”<sup>31</sup> This economic system had worked for over two centuries and had demonstrated itself to be profitable. To remain profitable, many southerners believed that they needed to be left alone to grow their resources unencumbered by national politics, even though the federal government maintained tariffs protecting the price of goods produced in the American South for three decades.<sup>32</sup>

The reality of slavery in the South was that it provided an inexpensive labor force that would continually produce the crops of the south. From an economic point of view, slaves were considerably more stable and cheaper than the factory laborers of the north. With the cost of labor being less expensive and more reliable, southerners believed that their economy was protected from economic fluctuations that other parts of the United States experienced. According to Huston,

Several rationales were given in defense of slavery. Africans were a naturally inferior people, the bondage of the African promoted white equality, slavery was the only means by which cotton could be produced, the scriptures sanctioned the institution, and slavery was a means of controlling a vengeful and barbaric people. In the 1850s another idea grew in strength: slavery was a far more humane means of ensuring an adequate material existence for the laborer than the wage system practiced in the north.<sup>33</sup>

“Nearly 400,000 masters had a capital investment of \$2 billion in nearly

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>32</sup> Kenneth M. Stampp, *America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1990) 20.

<sup>33</sup> Huston, 7.

4,000,000 slaves distributed over fifteen southern states.”<sup>34</sup> To protect this economic institution, the southern states fell back on the familiar philosophy of “state’s rights.” Each state had the right to determine how they were going to live, what laws they would live by, and how their economy would work. If this philosophy were challenged, then the south threatened that they would secede from the union.

The philosophy of “state’s rights” was rooted in the character of the earlier American colonies, where each colony was originally independent and self-governed.<sup>35</sup> This foundation was reinforced by John Adams, during the Continental Congress, when seconding a resolution of Richard Henry Lee, on June 7, 1776, saying, “That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States”<sup>36</sup>

Jay Winik, suggests that this was an issue of national identity. When the Revolutionary War ended, the colonists were not Britons any longer and they were not yet Americans. Each citizen of the United States could only best be described as a member of his own sovereign state.<sup>37</sup> As documents like the Articles of Confederation (1781) and the U. S. Constitution (1789) were drafted and approved, the authors chose to the name “the United States” in place of words that suggested a central, federal government.<sup>38</sup>

Michael A. Morrison points out that the centralized rights given to the federal government were seen, in the words of Maryland’s William Pinkney, as only a “means not an end.”<sup>39</sup> Morrison explains that while each state could not defend itself

---

<sup>34</sup> Stampp, 113.

<sup>35</sup> Jay Winik, *April 1865: The Month that Saved America*. (New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 2001) 13.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>39</sup> Michael A. Morrison. *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 49.



individually, “the old thirteen entered into a Union to defend the republic against foreign violence. In doing so, the states surrendered no power to manage domestic concerns.”<sup>40</sup>

From this time forward, there were many debates as to how much power the federal government should possess. As it grew, there were times when the federal government would exercise power that crossed a subjective boundary into what was considered the jurisdiction of the individual state. When this happened, the threat of succession was made. Winik points out that this is true of both the North and the South.<sup>41</sup>

### The West

Manifest Destiny, the divine right of the United States to possess all lands from coast to coast, was a popular theme starting from the time of the Revolutionary War. Winik describes Thomas Jefferson as someone who could see the United States as stretching from ocean to ocean.<sup>42</sup> A few years later, Jefferson put action to his vision as the driving force behind the Louisiana Purchase. In 1803, when this transaction was finalized, it doubled the size of the nation, created a Deep South, and opened up the West for greater expansion.<sup>43</sup>

Roy Nichols saw Manifest Destiny as a passionate characteristic of the American people. There was a sense of mission that America was created to promote freedom among the nations of the world, thus giving the United States license to expand not only from coast to coast, but beyond.<sup>44</sup> Morrison cites an excerpt from a speech James Buchanan made in Congress that captures this idea:

For this reason it is, that the Almighty has implanted in the very nature

---

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Winik, 24.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 10.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Roy F. Nichols. *The Stakes of Power*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961) 40.

of our people that spirit of progress, and that desire to roam abroad and seek new homes and new fields of enterprise, which characterizes them above all other nations....This spirit cannot be repressed.<sup>45</sup>

This vision and passion sparked the expansion westward.

When 19<sup>th</sup> century Americans spoke of the west, they could mean anything from territories surrounding the Mississippi river and Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean. During the 1850s, a large portion of the population was migrating into the area around the Great Lakes, specifically the area that would later become Minnesota. The territories of Oregon and Washington were both preparing for statehood. However, the predominant states and territories entangled in controversy were Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas. Challenges over slavery, an illegal election, and corrupt politics centering around whom would control the Federal government propelled them into the forefront.

“The early emigrants to all western territories found life hard and rough, and often violent. Among their shared experiences were Indian wars resulting from white encroachments on lands that were part of Indian reserves; lawlessness and eccentricities of frontier justice; corruption at the government land offices; bitter conflicts over land claims and the planting of town sites; and political battles over the location of territorial capitals, transportation lines, and banking facilities.”<sup>46</sup> However, settlers were attracted to the West for many reasons. Land was cheap and fertile, and western harvests were substantial.<sup>47</sup> Many early harvests were so plentiful that men’s hearts were turned to amassing great wealth and away from Christianity.<sup>48</sup>

Discussion of a coast-to-coast railroad had been ongoing for years and President

---

<sup>45</sup> *Annals of Congress*. 16<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> session. Cited in Morrison, 19.

<sup>46</sup> Stampp, 146.

<sup>47</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Fervent Prayer* (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press: 1974) 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

James Buchanan gave this idea his full support in his inaugural address.<sup>49</sup> The railroad presented many positives for western expansion. Western crops had a new and more efficient way of getting to northern markets. In addition, it made migration westward much easier. The railroad increased profits for all sections of the United States.

With the help of railroads, cities along trade routes grew quickly. For example, Cincinnati, Ohio grew from a small village to a thriving metropolis of 115,000 people in roughly a 50-year span.<sup>50</sup> Cincinnati, the crossroad for steamboats transporting goods up and down many rivers to places like Memphis, St. Louis, and New Orleans, flourished even more when the railroads made it possible to trade in the Great Lakes area and with eastern towns.<sup>51</sup>

### **Political Growth**

The challenge for each section of the country was their economic fragility. Northern states had to deal with the cost of resources, the cost of labor, the cost of credit, and the question of how much a consumer was willing to pay for those products. The challenge in the South included bad weather, poor harvests, and the growing sentiment against slavery. The western frontier had issues of its own, but since they were primarily territories and not states, they had little influence over the legislation being argued by the Federal government.

The question was one of control. Which section of the country would control the power of the Federal government? The issue of control quickly centered on the abolishment of slavery. If slavery were abolished, then the north would have the financial and political power to sway legislation in their favor. With the South maintaining slavery

---

<sup>49</sup> Stamp, 215.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 213-4.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

as a core element of its economy, the abolition of slavery would be economically catastrophic and politically disastrous, thus allowing northern politicians the upper hand over all future legislation and the direction of the country.

Slavery quickly became the central issue of public debate. All aspects of slavery were considered in the public mind. The issue mutually directed and was shaped by partisan politics, national events such as the Mexican war (1845), and by increased growth in western expansion. Historian Frank Beardsley describes the period in this way: “The trend of public events, the political agitation of the time, the Mexican war, the discussions and debates over the slavery question, the compromise measures introduced into the Senate of the United States by Henry Clay of Kentucky, the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law, the abrogation of Missouri Compromise, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court, all tended so to preoccupy the public mind that religion was largely crowded out.”<sup>52</sup>

The Mexican War and its spoils played a large role in the United States’ Manifest Destiny. David Pletcher saw the acquisition of the Southwest and the Pacific Coast as an indicator of the future greatness of the United States.<sup>53</sup> However, at the time of the war, many supported the acquisition of the southwest and the Pacific Coast as a natural next step in land growth, while others maintain that the acquisition of land was a barbarous task displaying greed for land.<sup>54</sup> Andrew Jackson, as many others, believed that the acquisition of Texas started out as a part of the Louisiana Purchase<sup>55</sup> and was greatly

---

<sup>52</sup> Frank Grenville Beardsley, *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals* (New York: American Tract Society:1943) 40-1.

<sup>53</sup> David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War* (Columbia, MO.: University of Missouri Press,1973 ) 1.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> H. W. Brand. *Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times* (New York: Doubleday, 2005) 508.

disappointed when John Quincy Adams gave up all the land from Texas to California and five million dollars to acquire Florida from Spanish rule in the Adams-Onís Treaty.<sup>56</sup>

It didn't matter which country controlled Texas, since it did not stop settlers from moving there. In 1820, Moses Austin received permission to colonize Texas from Spain on the condition that the new inhabitants were good Catholics and loyal to Spain.<sup>57</sup> The new settlers brought with them a culture and a language that was different, a frontier spirit that was in sharp contrast with 19<sup>th</sup> century Mexican lifestyles, and little commitment to Roman Catholicism.<sup>58</sup> Pletcher concludes that, "given the differences in customs and the confusion of the Mexican national government, conflict between Mexico and the Texas settlers was probably inevitable."<sup>59</sup>

Mexicans felt that Andrew Jackson had a plan to steal Texas from them.<sup>60</sup> Immigration to Texas and the subsequent conflict with the Texas settlers were the first pieces of this plan. Another piece of the puzzle involved sending Joel Poinsett as an ambassador to the new Republic of Mexico. Poinsett's appointment caused strife between the classes<sup>61</sup> as he overbearingly pushed for annexation of Texas by the United States.<sup>62</sup> He was seen as such an annoyance that Mexico asked the United States for his removal.<sup>63</sup> In addition, Jackson's prejudice against the Mexican people added to the negative sentiment. Ultimately, Mexico went to war with the United States to try to keep Texas.

The result of the war was that Mexico would recognize the United States' claim to

---

<sup>56</sup> Charles M. Wiltse, *The New Nation* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961) 83.

<sup>57</sup> Pletcher, 66.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 67.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Clement Eaton, *Henry Clay and the Art of American Politics* (Toronto, ON.: Little, Brown & Company (Canada) Limited, 1957) 58. and Pletcher, 69.

<sup>62</sup> Pletcher, 69.

<sup>63</sup> Eaton, 58. and Pletcher, 69.

Texas. In addition, Mexico would give the United States the territories of New Mexico and California for \$15 million and the United States would assume all Mexican debt owed to United States citizens.<sup>64</sup> “The acquisition of territory as a result of the Mexican War, the discovery of gold in California, and the opening up for settlement a vast tracts of land in the Middle West and Southwest stimulated immigration to this country.”<sup>65</sup>

With increased immigration, both to the United States and to the western territories, tensions increased over which territories would be slave states and which territories would be free. In the past, issues over expansion would have been easily settled, but not during this time period.

An appropriations bill, authored by James I. McKay of North Carolina, was sent to congress to fund the acquisition of the Mexican territories.<sup>66</sup> David Wilmot, a freshman Democratic representative from Pennsylvania, attached an amendment to the bill that stated that all of the territories acquired through this deal would be free (ie. non-slave) territories.<sup>67</sup> This, of course, made southern legislators furious and they mustered all their political clout to approve the bill for Mexican territories and remove Wilmot’s amendment.<sup>68</sup>

John C. Calhoun became perhaps the major spokesman for the South during this period. In 1847, he offered to the Senate a number of resolutions that would make the southern states’ position clear regarding of slavery.<sup>69</sup> According to Calhoun, territories belonged to the states, not the Federal government, and thus the territories were not

---

<sup>64</sup> Timothy Keese and Mark Sidwell. *United States History for Christian Schools* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1993) 256.

<sup>65</sup> Beardsley, *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals*, 41.

<sup>66</sup> Morrison, 40.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. 41.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>69</sup> Kersee, 262.

subject to Federal law. The Federal government could not dictate to a property owner what he must do with his personal property, i.e. slaves. Their personal property remained subject to the laws of the state in which the owner resided.

Opponents of Calhoun and his resolutions responded that the Federal government already had a precedent set and cited the Missouri Compromise. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 admitted Maine as a free state to balance Missouri as a slave state. With this exception, slavery was not permitted north of 36°30' latitude. Southern legislators responded by saying that the Federal government had acted outside of the parameters of the constitution and that the Southern legislators had agreed to this compromise to preserve the union.

With the failure of the Wilmot amendment, Calhoun's resolution and response, and the new territories acquired from Mexico, emotions and rhetoric continued to intensify. In 1850, Henry Clay offered a new Missouri Compromise that he hoped would be both agreeable and fair to both sides:

As a concession to the North, he proposed that (1) California be admitted as a free state and (2) the slave trade--but not slavery--be abolished in the District of Columbia. To the proslavery forces he offered (3) a federally enforced Fugitive Slave Act, which would put the government solidly behind the return of runaway slaves, and (4) the protection of slavery in the District of Columbia. In addition, Clay offered the two sides the joint concession, proposing that (5) the new territories of New Mexico and Utah be organized without reference to or restrictions on slavery.<sup>70</sup>

The presentation of Clay's latest Missouri Compromise brought a great deal of debate. Calhoun thought that the compromise did not go far enough. He wanted more protection for "state's rights" and an assurance that the power of the North and the South

---

<sup>70</sup> Keese, 265.

would always be equal, and thus one never dominated by the other.<sup>71</sup> In contrast, President Zachary Taylor did not agree with concessions to extend slavery into the new territories. In his view, the compromise would only intensify the sectional divisions and delay the admission of the new territories.<sup>72</sup> A third point of view was heard from Daniel Webster. His purpose for entry in the debate was to rebuke “extremists” on both sides and reinforce the concept of the Union. There had been a great deal of discussion about secession, even peaceful secession, but Webster pointed out that this was a fantasy and any secession would be bloody and violent. He concluded his remarks by emphasizing the importance of the United States being a nation built on the concepts of liberty and union.<sup>73</sup> Winik quotes Webster’s powerful words, “Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.”<sup>74</sup> While abolitionists viewed Webster’s speech as quite abusive realistically, it was his speech that held the union together for the time being.

The Missouri Compromise of 1850 produced momentary peace in the midst of this turmoil. That peace ended abruptly, ironically by one of the components of the compromise. The Fugitive Slave Law required that runaway slaves be returned to their owners and resume their life of bondage. The emotional impact of this law was a powerful weapon in the hands of Northern abolitionists. In response to what they saw as an inhumane law, many northern states adopted “Personal Liberty” laws to act out their defiance. One of their many concerns regarding this law was that many free African-Americans would be kidnapped and sent to slavery. In reality, only 200 slaves were returned to their owners during this time. The Fugitive Slave Law only served to intensify

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 266.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 265.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 266.

<sup>74</sup> Winik, 22.



already volatile emotions and widened the divisions between north and south. As a postscript, the Fugitive Slave Law and other previous versions of this law were abolished in 1864.<sup>75</sup>

The election of 1852 was an eye-opening experience for the Democratic Party. Since sectional divisions were growing, it became difficult to find a candidate who would be agreeable to both sides of the division. Candidates like Louis Cass, James Buchanan, and Stephen A. Douglas could not gain a two-thirds majority needed to receive the party's nomination. After some serious searching, the party nominated Franklin Pierce. He was described as "a handsome man of engaging charm, modest talents, and vague."<sup>76</sup> The Democratic Party had exchanged the possibility of strong leadership for someone with an undistinguishable political record.

Unfortunately for the Democrats, enthusiasm generated by the election for Pierce soon disappeared. With national politics becoming more volatile, the American people needed a strong leader, someone with wisdom and foresight to steer the nation through the troubled waters of slavery and increasing sectional division, and bring the nation to a place of healing. Pierce was not that leader. As President, Stamp described Pierce as "weak and vacillating, showing little capacity for growth in meeting his responsibilities."<sup>77</sup> From the beginning, he was greatly influenced by southern extremists. This influence would have repercussions throughout the remainder of his term.

---

<sup>75</sup> Keesee., 267-9. Michael F. Holt *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978) 211-2. Although the Fugitive Slave Laws were abolished in 1864, there was still much opposition by the Democrats that the abolition of this law and the reinforcement of the Personal Liberties act were unconstitutional. Holt emphasizes that the personal liberties legislation (1850) would provide "jury trials, defense attorneys, and other procedural safeguards for accused fugitives." When the north won the war and the slaves were free, the energy of the debate over the Fugitive Slave Laws was focused elsewhere.

<sup>76</sup> Stamp, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

Pierce's greatest blunder was his support for Stephen Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854). This Act voided the power of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 by allowing the newly formed territories of Kansas and Nebraska the right to decide whether they were going to be slave states or a free states. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 would have forced both territories to be free states.

In 1855, Kansas held elections to establish a territorial legislature and to legalize slavery. A large number of pro-slavery voters from Missouri crossed the border into Kansas to aid in the pro-slavery electoral victory. Unhappy with the outcome of this election, free-state settlers met in Topeka to have their own election, establish their own legislature, draw up an anti-slavery constitution, and elect their own governor.

President Pierce, instead of declaring both the elections fraudulent, chose to recognize the pro-slavery legislature. Shortly after that, bloody conflict broke out between the two sides. "Pierce placed full responsibility for the troubles in Kansas, first, on northern 'propagandist colonization' designed to promote its 'peculiar view of policy' and, second, on the attempt of free-state settlers 'to erect a revolutionary government' with the sedulous aid of the outside 'agents of disorder.'"<sup>78</sup>

Since this was a presidential election year, news correspondents reporting from Kansas often gave distorted views of what was happening in Kansas to their readers on the East Coast. Eventually, peace was restored and the Democrats won the election of 1856. Unfortunately, the distorted views only added fuel to the fire of sectional division.

### **The New Republican Party**

In 1854, a new Republican Party was established. This was not the Republican Party of Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson's Republican Party went through several name

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 6.

changes becoming the Democratic-Republican Party and then the Democratic Party. During the 1850s, this was the Democratic Party that favored the Kansas-Nebraska Act.<sup>79</sup>

The new Republican Party was created through the merger of several disenfranchised groups. It included fragments of the defunct Whig Party, “anti-Nebraska Democrats angry about the repeal of the Missouri compromise, Free-Soil partisans who demanded Federal legislation to exclude slavery from the territories; a few political abolitionists from the Liberty party; and a large segment of the currently powerful northern anti-Catholic nativists.”<sup>80</sup> From the beginning, the political platform of the Republican party started out opposed to slavery and the Kansas-Nebraska act. During the Lincoln presidency, the Republicans embraced the importance of free enterprise, claiming “every citizen, however lowly his start in life, should be guaranteed the rights of a proper reward for his efforts, his thrift, and his ingenuity.”<sup>81</sup>

The Democratic platform of 1856 was built on the concept of popular sovereignty, believing that the issue of slavery should be decided by the majority. The Republican Party built their platform on “affirmations of the Declaration of Independence.”<sup>82</sup> Their two-point message insisted that Kansas be admitted as a free state and that the institutions of slavery and polygamy be abolished.<sup>83</sup> In the end, the Democratic candidate, James Buchanan, won the election of 1856.

Republicans were not discouraged by results of the election. Even though Buchanan had won the presidency, Republicans had done extremely well in being organized less than two years and yet holding Buchanan to forty-five percent of the

---

<sup>79</sup> Franklin L. Burdette. ed. In *Readings for Republicans* (New York: Oceana Publishers, 1960) 10.

<sup>80</sup> Stamp., 5.

<sup>81</sup> Burdette, 12.

<sup>82</sup> Stamp., 6.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

national vote, making him a minority president. This charged Republicans with enthusiasm. Their first goal was to consolidate Republican forces. Their second goal was the proclamation of their anti-slavery message. Although the south was vocal against the Republican message, few Republicans took the southern threats of secession seriously.

During the late 1840s and early 1850s, a specific court case captured national attention. The litigation was started by an African-American man named Dred Scott on behalf of his family. They were suing for their freedom out of slavery. Each time there was a ruling in this case, including appeals, the ruling was against Scott and his family.

The case eventually made its way to the Supreme Court. After a great deal of deliberation and several weeks of writing and revising, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney read the court's decision. The decision was in favor of the defendants, the slave owners. The decision was described as groundbreaking and bold in areas where the Constitution is gray. It was also described as a partisan decision, an act of defiance in the face of abolitionists, Free-Soilers, and Republicans.<sup>84</sup>

Michael Holt suggests that "the Court might have followed precedent and ruled narrowly that state law prevail in the matter and that Scott is therefore still a slave. Instead, it chose to rule more broadly."<sup>85</sup> The fifty-five page decision focused on the question of whether Scott had a right to sue. The court decided that slaves were not included in the word "citizens," thus they did not have the rights guaranteed by the constitution. Taney continued by saying that the state may have the right, in its own power, to confer citizenship of that state on an individual, but that state does not have the right to confer United States citizenship on anyone. Taney maintained that the framers of

---

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>85</sup> Michael F. Holt. *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978) 202.

the constitution never intended the “negro African race” to be included as citizens and any act of emancipation at the state level was not recognized at the Federal level.<sup>86</sup> Stampf states that the constitution never lists any race of people for exclusion; however, Taney maintained African-Americans were non-citizens.<sup>87</sup>

The Dred Scott decision was an encouragement to the South and to slave owners. However, Eric Foner observed that based on the decision of the Supreme Court, Republicans felt that if local laws could be ignored for technicalities of federal law, how long would it be before the federal government said that states could not exclude slavery in free states?<sup>88</sup> In 1858, Abraham Lincoln and William Seward stated publicly that slavery would move into free states if it were not halted, thus articulating those fears.<sup>89</sup>

The national debate continued to grow more volatile, all the way to and including the secession of southern states from the union. The election of 1860 didn’t improve matters, and when Abraham Lincoln, a Republican, was elected President, Southerners saw that as a direct threat to their way of life.

The Fulton Street Prayer Revival came at a time when the United States was deeply divided. It was divided over the issue of slavery, it was divided geographically, and it was divided by economic greed. The political arena grew more volatile as the country moved towards the Civil War.

### **The Panic of 1857**

As American society drifted away from spiritual effects of the Second Great

---

<sup>86</sup> Stampf, 94.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution stated that all individuals “bound to service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. In no way is this a denial of citizenship, however, Taney would state that three fifths of a citizen is not a whole citizen. It is easy to see where this decision was the adverse foundation for the fourteenth amendment.

<sup>88</sup> Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) 97.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 101.

Awakening, the American heart was set on the accumulation of wealth. The 1840s and 1850s were times of great prosperity. In 1864, J. S. Gibbons reflected back on this time stating, “Up to August, 1857, our commercial affairs were generally prosperous. The local journals throughout the country represented business as in a wholesome condition. High prices were said to have enriched the Farmer, the stockgrower[sic], and the planter. Trade and mechanical industry flourished with corresponding success.”<sup>90</sup> With the exception of the financial panic of 1853, this was a time of extended prosperity.

In addition to good harvests and success in manufacturing, land speculation in the west, and the growth of the railroad were key features of the affluence of this time period. Land was cheap and plentiful, the railroads took goods to market more quickly than had been previously possible, and banks were aggressive in extending credit to fund these financial ventures.

Due to the fact that no Federal regulatory commission existed during this period, banks were regulated by the states. During the 1850s, a variety of different banks existed, including “state-owned banks, private banks chartered by states with free-banking laws, and uncharted private banks operated by individuals or partners.”<sup>91</sup> During the first seven years of the 1850s, the number of banks grew to roughly fifteen hundred, with most on the East Coast, and roughly sixty in New York City alone.<sup>92</sup>

At the beginning of 1857, many felt that the end of prosperity was nowhere in sight. However, economists, politicians, and newspapers began to notice that banking institutions had over-increased their discount lines. At the same time there was a great

---

<sup>90</sup> J. S. Gibbons, *The Banks of New York and The Panic of 1857* (New York: Greenwood Publishers, 1968) 343.

<sup>91</sup> Stampp, 217.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

influx of foreign goods into the American market.<sup>93</sup> A general feeling was developing that the values of the securities of the day were over-inflated.<sup>94</sup> Another concern was whether banks had enough money on deposit to cover species<sup>95</sup> that were issued to depositors.

By late spring and summer, these concerns became the issues of debate. Many journalists and economists felt that a financial crisis was imminent. The *Washington Union* began to warn that the end of this time of prosperity was coming.<sup>96</sup> Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, warned that the economy was about ready to come to a stop and the incident that would arrest the economy would be one that no one could have predicted.<sup>97</sup>

The Crimean war<sup>98</sup> had its effect on the American economy. The two previous years had bolstered the American economy through the export of American agriculture. Since many of the United States' trade partners were involved in this war, they found it difficult to produce their own crops and so they purchased what they needed from America. American farmers received high prices for what they grew at the expense of the Europeans. The Crimean war ended in 1856, yet the American farmer continued to grow their crops at the same rate and it threatened to overwhelm domestic markets.<sup>99</sup>

Concerns surfaced as to whether banks had enough financial resources on deposit, including precious metals, to cover demands of depositors. Banks had two ways of getting the needed precious metals. First, they could secure them from the U.S.

---

<sup>93</sup> Huston, 13.

<sup>94</sup> Gibbons, 343.

<sup>95</sup> Coins, generally gold or silver.

<sup>96</sup> Stampp, 219.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> A war waged between Russia and the allied forces of England, France, Turkey, and Sardinia, during the years of 1853 to 1856, over who would be guardian over Palestine, Russia or France.

<sup>99</sup> Huston, 5.

government and second from the gold mines of California. *Harper's Weekly* reported in September that a ship carrying \$1,500,000.00 in bullion had sunk off the coast of South America, a shipment intended to help diffuse the growing concerns of financial crisis in New York City.<sup>100</sup>

The Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company was the most respected bank in Ohio,<sup>101</sup> and that same respect was given to its New York City branch in New York.<sup>102</sup> On 24 August 1857, company president, Charles Stetson, announced that the company was suspending payments. He attributed this to loans not being repaid in a timely fashion.<sup>103</sup> However, the truth was more unseemly. Edwin C. Ludlow, manager of the New York office, had embezzled funds and had extended far too many risky loans so that the home office was unable to maintain a healthy cash flow.<sup>104</sup> In a matter of only a few days, stockholders saw the value of their stock drop eighty-five percent.<sup>105</sup>

This news sent shockwaves throughout the nation. Many hoped that this financial crisis would be isolated to New York City, but that was not the case. At this time in history, large banks made loans to smaller banks, which made loans to even smaller banks, and at the same time all of them made risky loans to the railroads. When the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company realized the situation they were in, they started calling in loans they had made to other institutions. Unfortunately, the smaller banks did not have the funds to cover their own extensions of credit and so many other banks made statements of suspension of payment as well. This started a domino effect throughout the

---

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>102</sup> Stamp, 220.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 222.

<sup>104</sup> Huston, 14.

<sup>105</sup> Stamp, 222.



financial world. “The first week of October found the financial structure crumbling and trade at a standstill.”<sup>106</sup>

The financial panic was a wonderful opportunity for Democrats to divert attention from sectional instability towards the excesses of banks and the lack of the regulatory oversight by states.<sup>107</sup> The Democrats spoke harshly of the wealthy, grouping them together with the banks. The democratic solution called for states to restrict the issuing of bank notes, “require larger specie deposits, and revoke charters of banks that suspended specie payments.”<sup>108</sup>

Unemployment in the United States began to soar. In New York City, unemployment estimates ranged from thirty thousand to one hundred thousand people.<sup>109</sup> “By November, Philadelphia’s unemployment numbered nearly 40,000; and among the state’s ironworkers some 20,000 were without jobs.”<sup>110</sup> Although the Northeast felt the unemployment more intensely, repercussions were felt throughout the rest of the country.

Those unemployed felt as though they were fighting for their lives. Winter was coming and they had no money for food, clothing, or shelter. In their desperation, they organized rallies and challenged politicians to present solutions for the challenges of society. It was realized that the unemployed had labored only to create a living at a subsistence level, while corporate leaders created nothing, did no physical labor, yet grew increasingly wealthy. After a while, every solution sounded more like political rhetoric than the answer to their problems.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> Huston, 19.

<sup>107</sup> Holt, 199.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 200.

<sup>109</sup> Huston, 25.

<sup>110</sup> Stampp, 226.

<sup>111</sup> Huston, 26-27.

This financial crisis was devastating for many. While the financial panic of 1837 was financially more devastating than the crisis of 1857, the emotions of 1857 were more psychologically devastating.<sup>112</sup> Gibbons characterizes, “A financial panic has been likened to a malignant epidemic, which kills more by terror than by real disease.”<sup>113</sup>

As the end of 1857 approached, confidence in banks and politicians were greatly diminished. The banks stayed closed until mid-December at which time they were able to produce \$200,000,000.00 of gold in reserves and from new shipments. As the financial crisis was coming to a close, however, the repercussions among the people would continue for quite some time. The Presbyterian Quarterly Review reported, “A year has passed, and still it seems impossible to inspire man with faith in man in regard to business transactions; the nerves of the country are still timid, its muscles weak. The panic has been followed by a paralysis, which still holds the land under its deathlike power.”<sup>114</sup>

J. Edwin Orr discusses the significance of the financial crisis in relationship to the Fulton Street Revival. The start of the revival coincided closely with the mass awareness of the financial struggle, as did the revival in Hamilton, Ontario under the ministry of Walter and Phoebe Palmer.<sup>115</sup> Beardsley pointed out that the financial crisis was not what caused the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, citing the financial panic of 1837 having a stronger impact on society, but not causing a revival.<sup>116</sup> Warren Candler, Methodist

---

<sup>112</sup> Keith J. Hardman, *Seasons of Refreshing: Evangelism and Revivals in America* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 1994) 160.

<sup>113</sup> Gibbons, 347.

<sup>114</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 490.

<sup>115</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Light of the Nations* (Grand Rapids, MI.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965) 103-4.

<sup>116</sup> Beardsley, Frank Grenville. *History of American Revivals* (New York: American Tract Society, 1912) 217.

evangelist and revivalist, described the situation saying, “And now that the wheels of industry stood still and the noisy cries of greed were hushed, men stopped to hear the voice of the Spirit calling them to repentance. And they heeded the heavenly call. Another revival of national expansion began.”<sup>117</sup>

### **Religious Historical Background**

Using the observations of Nathan Hatch as a lens, we discover that American Christianity during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century took on many characteristics of the surrounding culture. According to Hatch, “Christianity was effectively reshaped by common people who molded it in their own image and who threw themselves into expanding influence. Increasingly assertive common people wanted their leaders unpretentious, their doctrines self-evident and down-to-earth, their music lively and singable, and their churches in local hands.”<sup>118</sup> Summarizing this differently, Christianity was only as valuable as it was understandable and applicable in the lives of common people.<sup>119</sup>

Hatch characterized this time in three ways. First, common people “denied the age-old distinction that set the clergy apart as a separate order of men, and they refused to defer to learned theologians and traditional orthodoxies.”<sup>120</sup> Second, “these movements empowered ordinary people by taking their deepest spiritual impulses at face value rather than subjecting them to the scrutiny of orthodox doctrine and the frowns of respectable clergymen.”<sup>121</sup> Third, “the early republic was also a democratic movement.”<sup>122</sup>

Looking at history linearly, the Second Great Awakening began the nineteenth

---

<sup>117</sup> Hardman, 172.

<sup>118</sup> Hatch, 9.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

century with God's reviving activities. These activities continued pretty much unbroken for half a century.<sup>123</sup> However, there is some dispute over the antebellum of the Civil War. Concerning the time period of 1840 to 1857, many scholars have tried to postulate that this time period was spiritually dead, while other scholars show small revivals and the ministry of Charles Finney as bridging that seventeen year gap. There is truth in both positions.

Those who maintain that those seventeen years were a time of spiritual desolation, normally point to society of that time as being more interested in wealth than anything else. "Thus it was the 'cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things' so preoccupied the minds of men that they became utterly indifferent to the claims of religion."<sup>124</sup> In 1854, Charles Finney described the spiritual atmosphere as difficult, "when ministers and people of all schools, seem stupidly insensible together of the condition of men who are going to hell in multitudes."<sup>125</sup> J. Edwin Orr argues that there were new members being added to the church during this time, however, the quantity of people joining the church could not keep up with those leaving the church.

Another contributing factor to the spiritual desert of society was the extremism of William Miller and his followers. Although a five point Calvinist, Miller claimed that through examination of Scripture he had discovered the date range of the second coming of Jesus Christ. Feeling strongly about this revelation, Miller and his followers "blanketed the nation with an estimated four million pieces of literature within four years, including prophetic charts that illustrated how the world would end in 1843."<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup> Beardsley, *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals*, 39.

<sup>124</sup> Beardsley, *History of American Revivals*, 216.

<sup>125</sup> "The Revival." *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 487.

<sup>126</sup> Hatch, 124.

Hatch groups Miller with other “upstarts” whose message was considerably different from the message of the mainstream Christianity of the day.<sup>127</sup> They were described as genius communicators, who people found inviting, compelling, and authoritative.<sup>128</sup> “Their coarse language, earthly humor, biting sarcasm, and commonsense reasoning appealed to the uneducated but left the professional clergy without a ready defense.”<sup>129</sup>

Miller preached and developed a large following. Showing the impact on the listening audience, Francis D. Nichols, pastor, Seventh-day Adventist scholar, and past editor of the Seventh-day Adventist church paper, wrote “Men might not believe Miller’s preaching, and yet have a strange feeling of uneasiness. They may have even looked furtively at the sky betimes as the fateful year drew near.”<sup>130</sup>

Miller never felt comfortable about establishing the exact date of Christ’s second advent. In his *Apology and Defense*, he states, “I had never been positive as to any particular day for the Lord’s appearing.”<sup>131</sup> If his calculations were correct, then the end would be sometime in 1843. He preferred a range of dates starting at March 21, 1843 and ending a year later. Quite a bit of pressure was placed on Miller for the exact date by his brethren and the press. In 1842, some of his preaching colleagues gave the exact date of Christ’s return as April 23, 1843 and removed Miller’s “if” from the proclamation, thus removing Miller’s date range. Miller felt that “some had their minds fixed on a particular

---

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. 134. Hatch and a few other preachers of the time fit this category. In Hatch’s list he includes Elias Smith, Lorenzo Dow, and Joseph Smith in addition to William Miller.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>130</sup> Francis D. Nichols. *The Midnight Cry: A Defense of the Character and Conduct of William Miller and the Millerites, who Mistakenly Believed that the Second Coming of Christ would take Place in the Year 1844* (Takomka Park, Washington, DC.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944) 135.

<sup>131</sup> William Miller. *William Miller’s Apology and Defense* (Charlotte, NC.: Advent Christian Publication, 2000) 16.

days; but I could find no evidence for such, unless the types of the Mosaic law pointed to the feast of Tabernacles.”<sup>132</sup>

When the exact date predicted by Millerites had passed, Miller expressed his disappointment. The passing of the exact date did not change his belief in the close return of Christ, nor did it discredit his date range theory.

In a frenzied fashion, the Millerites reevaluated and proclaimed a new date, October 22, 1844.<sup>133</sup> The momentum for Christ’s return had grown to fanaticism. Miller observed, “I have been pained to see a spirit of sectarianism and bigotry, in some sections, which disfellowships everything that does not square with the narrow prejudices of individual minds.”<sup>134</sup> Restating his point with a corrective appeal, Miller says, “Some have an inclination to indulge in harsh and denunciatory remarks against all who do not agree with them. We are all liable to err; but we should avoid thus giving occasion of offense.”<sup>135</sup> In an effort to clearly state his view, Miller says,

I have no confidence in any of the new theories that have grown out of that movement, viz., that Christ then came as the Bridegroom, that the door of mercy was closed, that there is no salvation for sinners, that the seventh trumpet then sounded, or that it was a fulfillment of prophecy in any sense. The spirit of fanaticism which has resulted from it, in some places, leading to extravagance and excess, I regard as of the same nature as those which retarded the reformation of Germany; and the same as have been connected with every religious movement since the first advent.<sup>136</sup>

When the second date passed, most of Miller followers were distraught. Few Christians, who were followers, were redeemed from the disillusionment of Millerites

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Beardsley, *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals*, 40.

<sup>134</sup> Miller, 17.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 19.

prophecy. Many Christians lost their faith and never attended church again.<sup>137</sup> The Millerite movement fell into disharmony and disorganization.<sup>138</sup>

The alternative view of religious history maintained that there was a continuous positive religious influence from the Second Great Awakening to the beginning of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, and they point to the work of Charles Finney. Finney's work began in the 1820s and had an influence on society until his death. During the time prior to the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, Finney held meetings in New England.

In 1851, Finney held meetings in Syracuse, New York where one hundred thousand people embraced the Christian faith.<sup>139</sup> Two years prior to Fulton Street, Finney held meetings in Boston, Massachusetts. Ministers and layman came from several miles to hear Finney. The influence of these meetings spread to many outlying areas up to the time of the revival in New York City.<sup>140</sup>

Other meetings of that time would include those conducted by Methodist revivalist James Caughey in Philadelphia,<sup>141</sup> the Presbyterian meetings in Pittsburgh, and the collegiate revival meetings in Virginia. Those attending the Presbyterian meetings in Pittsburgh and later in Cincinnati spent much time talking about how to properly prepare for a great revival.<sup>142</sup> As a result, a day of humility, fasting, and prayer was declared.<sup>143</sup>

J. S. White, pastor of the church on the campus of Washington College in Lexington, Kentucky, had a strong interest in and burden for revival. He often prayed towards that end. He refused to organize protracted meetings for fear that his efforts

---

<sup>137</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Light of the Nations*, 99.

<sup>138</sup> George R. Knight. *Millennial Fever and the End of the World* (Boise, ID.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1993) 207.

<sup>139</sup> Wesley Duewel, *Revival Fire* (Grand Rapid, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995) 126.

<sup>140</sup> Beardsley, *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals*, 42.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Duewel, 127.

would be “in the flesh.” In 1856, he privately discovered that several women were quietly coming together to pray for the salvation of souls.<sup>144</sup>

Two unique events happened within a short time, which through God’s providence, led to revival. The first event was the opening of saloons in close proximity to the campuses of Washington College and Virginia Military Institute, at which White called for a season of intercessory prayer.<sup>145</sup> The second event was the accidental shooting of a college student. At Washington College, a Mr. Booker was shot accidentally by his roommate and close friend. After the shooting, Mr. Booker reaffirmed his faith in Jesus Christ and spent the remaining time exhorting his friends to do the same. Mr. Booker lived two days after being shot.<sup>146</sup>

The result of these events was a revival that lasted two months. Four ministers spoke to this impassioned group. The influence of this revival spread south to North Carolina. In the end, fifty-five new disciples were added to the Presbyterian Church.<sup>147</sup>

Canada experienced revival at roughly the same time as the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. As early as 1856, many denominations were feeling a need to spend time in prayer seeking the Lord over the poor shape of the Christian faith in English-speaking Canada. Evangelist Isaiah Wallace, before preaching in New Brunswick, confessed that he felt more like praying than preaching. The Spirit was moving, calling many to prayer.

In June through October of 1857, Dr. Walter and Phoebe Palmer started a set of meetings in Hamilton, Ontario. Each meeting averaged five thousand people. Several hundred people put their faith in Jesus Christ. It was during these meetings that the

---

<sup>144</sup> Benjamin Rice Lacy, Jr., *Revivals in the Midst of Years* (Hopewell, VA.: Royal Publishers, Inc., 1968) 109.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 110.



Palmer felt the unusual power of conviction.<sup>148</sup>

Dr. Palmer was successful in the medical profession. His wife, Phoebe, led a successful Bible study in their home for many years and wrote several books. During six months of the year, the Palmers would speak at Methodist camp meetings throughout English-speaking Canada and New England. Phoebe would do most of the speaking. She would preach on doctrinal issues such as holiness and entire sanctification, the second work of grace. In addition, the Palmers started the Five Point Mission, which worked with the poor in New York City.<sup>149</sup>

Orr did not cite the Hamilton Revival or the ministry of the Palmers as the cause of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. He did say that the Hamilton Revival and the financial panic of 1857 were worth looking into because they both happened at roughly the same time as the Fulton Street Prayer Revival.<sup>150</sup> Throughout their ministries, the Palmers had never experienced a meeting like the Hamilton Revival. The Hamilton Revival, however, was much like the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. Both were characterized by a lack of professional leadership, spontaneous origin, a spirit of conviction falling over the meetings, and rapid spread.<sup>151</sup> The main difference between Hamilton and Fulton Street is Hamilton did not result in prayer meetings.

### **The Fulton Street Prayer Revival**

New York City, the site of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, had experienced significant change during the 1850s. Like the rest of the country, New York City enjoyed a time of prosperity. As the rich and the middle class developed wealth, they started

---

<sup>148</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *A Fervent Prayer*, 2.

<sup>149</sup> Hardman, 173.

<sup>150</sup> Orr, *The Light of the Nations*, 101.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

looking for nicer places to live and to raise their families. A social migration started with the wealthy and middle class moving from the inner-city to the suburbs. The inner-city became the home of the immigrant and the poor as well as new businesses. The inner-city also became a place of poverty, increased crime, and great social need.

With many people leaving the inner-city for the suburbs, attendance at local churches dropped as well. Those who moved desired to attend church in their own communities. The inner-city church began to lose influence in surrounding neighborhoods, and while many churches only desired to change that trend, some churches actively attempted to make a change.

Jeremiah Lanphier, a local businessman, wanted to do something more substantial. He decided to leave his business endeavors and become an inner-city missionary. He contacted the North Dutch Church located at the corner of Fulton and Williams Streets. Using this church as a home base, he hoped to reach the unchurched within New York City.

Lanphier was born in 1809, in the town of Cocksackie, New York. For over twenty years, he was a successful businessman in the mercantile trade. In 1842, he made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as savior at the Broadway Tabernacle (which was established by Charles Finney in 1836). He was a member of the Brick Presbyterian Church, where James W. Alexander was pastor, until he left to become an inner-city missionary through the North Dutch Church. A newspaper of the time described Lanphier in one of their editions, stating he was “tall, with a pleasant face, an affectionate manner, and indomitable energy and perseverance; a good singer, gifted in prayer and extrication, a welcome guest to win the house, shrewd and endowed with much tact and

common sense.”<sup>152</sup>

In a special meeting held on 17 June 1857, the Missionary Committee of the North Dutch Church developed a job description for an inner-city lay missionary in a resolution, and recorded it in their minutes.

Resolved, that the Elders and Deacons worshipping at the North Church be a committee to employ a suitable person or persons, to be employed in visiting families in the vicinity of that Church, and inducing them to attend the services of the church, and also to bring the children into the Sabbath school, and to rise such other means as may be deemed advisable for the extending of our Redeemer’s Kingdom in that portion of the city and that the sum of not to exceed One-Thousand dollars be appropriated and placed at the disposal...<sup>153</sup>

The following day, the record of the minutes started with, “Resolved, that J. C. Lanphier be considered a suitable person to act as Missionary.”<sup>154</sup>

On 1 July 1857, he started his new position as an inner-city missionary. The city was divided into districts and Lanphier systematically attempted to visit every single individual in each district. He distributed Bibles, pamphlets describing the church and its services, and gospel tracts to as many people as he could. In addition to his visitation efforts, he established boys clubs and a Sunday school inside the church parish.<sup>155</sup>

He prayed for people as he visited, but he felt he was having little effect on the city. “So, day after day, and many times a day, this man was on his knees, and his constant prayer was ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me do?’ The oftener [sic] he prays, the

---

<sup>152</sup> Beardsley, *History of American Revivals*, 219. Beardsley does not provide the source of his quote. He refers to the newspaper as “an eastern journal of the period.” (p. 219) In an attempt to find the exact source, this writer has looked in Orr’s *Fervent Prayer*, Prime’s *The Power of Prayer*, and both editions of Chamber’s (title variants of) *The Noon Day Prayer Meeting*. He found the quote in each book, but without a reference of the newspaper. In my personal reading of periodicals of this time period, this writer has not come across this quote.

<sup>153</sup> *Minutes of the Missionary Committee of the North Dutch Church*. Special Meeting 17 June 1857. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, 18 June 1857.

<sup>155</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Event of the Century* (Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989) 53.

more earnest he becomes.”<sup>156</sup> Not only does this time in prayer strengthen his resolve, but also provides a spiritual refuge where he can pour his soul out to God and where he can be comforted.

As he walked around the city, Lanphier noticed the anxiety on the faces of the businessmen. He thought that it would be valuable to open the church for an hour at noon giving local businessmen an opportunity to pray. He shared the idea with a friend only to receive a discouraging response. However, the consistory committee gave their approval and he made plans to hold the first prayer meeting on 23 September 1857. Orr points out that the starting date of the prayer meeting was a full three weeks before the financial panic happened.<sup>157</sup>

Lanphier decided to advertise by handing out handbills. The handbills were two sided. On the front, it read:

How often shall I pray? As often as the language of prayer is in my heart; as often as I see my need of help; as often as I feel the power of temptation; as often as I am made sensible of any spiritual declension, or feel the aggression of a worldly, earthly spirit...In prayer, we leave the business of time for that of eternity, and intercourse with men for intercourse with God.<sup>158</sup>

On the reverse side of the handbill, it read:

A day Prayer-Meeting is held every Wednesday from 12 to 1 o'clock in the Consistory building in the rear of the North Dutch Church, corner of Fulton and William Streets. This meeting is intended to give merchants, mechanics, clerks, strangers and businessmen generally an opportunity to stop and call on God amid the perplexities incident to their respective avocations. It will continue for one hour; but it is also designed for those who find it inconvenient to remain more than 5 or 10 minutes, as well as for those who can spare a whole hour. Necessary interruption will be slight, because anticipated. Those in haste often expedite their business engagements by halting

---

<sup>156</sup> Prime, 5.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

to lift their voices to the throne of grace in humble, grateful prayer.<sup>159</sup>

These handbills were distributed throughout the city.

When the first meeting started, Lanphier was alone. At 12:30pm, he heard the footsteps of someone coming to pray. By the end of the hour, the little group consisted of six men who enjoyed a wonderful time of prayer. The second meeting, held on 1 October 1857, consisted of twenty men. The third meeting, held on 7 October 1857, was attended by between thirty and forty men. From this point on, the prayer meeting became a daily occurrence.

On 14 October 1857, banks closed because of the financial panic. On that day, the prayer meeting was attended by over one hundred men. These men were described as being under the conviction of sin and seeking an interest in Jesus Christ.<sup>160</sup>

Prayer meeting attendance continued to grow quickly. By the end of the second month, all three lecture rooms in the Consistory building were filled. The financial crisis subsided in November of 1857, yet the numbers coming to the church for prayer increased. It was not long before other churches started opening their doors for prayer, and they too experienced that soon after the church was open for prayer, it was filled to capacity.

In early 1858, New York newspapers were writing about the prayer meeting revivals. Many chronicled the unprecedented growth of prayer meetings, the conversions to a faith in Jesus, and often times answers to prayer. Most newspapers wrote favorably of the revival.<sup>161</sup> “The newspapers also noted that there was no fanaticism, no hysteria, nor even any preaching at these meetings; instead, everyone felt an irresistible urge to

---

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 53-4.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>161</sup> Hardman, 175-6.

pray.”<sup>162</sup>

By March 1858, owners started opening their theaters to prayer meetings. On 17 March 1858, Burton’s Theatre on Chambers Street was open for the first time to prayer meetings. Mr. Burton, the owner, agreed to allow religious services in his theater as long as prayers were offered for him. When the doors opened, the theater was instantly packed. People were hanging from every projection on the wall, sitting behind curtains, and filling every available space.

Connected to the theater was a barroom. After the theater was filled, the doors of the barroom were opened and it was filled as well. The meeting in the theater was going well until a loud disturbance interrupted the meeting. The disturbance was from the overflow in the barroom where a meeting was happening simultaneously. The loud disturbance was men singing. Dr. Henry Ward Beecher was presiding over the meeting in the theater. When the singing interrupted their meeting, he stopped and expressed thanksgiving that such a thing could happen.<sup>163</sup>

Before long, there were over 150 places to pray inside of New York City.<sup>164</sup> Newspapers estimated that over 6100 people were attending the daily prayer meetings.<sup>165</sup>

The revival began to spread throughout the country. In Chicago, two thousand men were meeting in Metropolitan Hall. “Dwight L. Moody attended all the prayer meetings and was much influenced spiritually; he led the YMCA noonday prayer meetings.”<sup>166</sup>

---

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>163</sup> Orr, *The Light of the Nations*, 106.

<sup>164</sup> Duewel, 129.

<sup>165</sup> Orr, *The Light of the Nations*, 107.

<sup>166</sup> Earle E. Cairns *An Endless Line of Splendor: Revivals and Their Leaders from the Great Awakening to the Present* (Wheaton, IL.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1986) 150.

It wasn't long before the waves of this revival spread throughout Europe and around the world. Orr notes that although the financial panic and bank closures may have had an effect on the revival in the United States, this was not the case around the world. Financial panic and bank closures only happened in the United States, so it would be unreasonable to describe this revival as the "bank panic revival." What did coincide with this revival were prayer meetings. This might best be called a "prayer meeting revival."<sup>167</sup>

By the summer of 1858, a record book was purchased and put into service so that the leaders could capture the feeling of the services and anything special that occurred. The prayer meetings held in the consistory room at the North Dutch Church were chaired by different people, so the entries in the record book show drastic differences in detail.

Talbot Chambers, the pastor of the North Dutch Church, regularly chaired the prayer meetings and his entries were bare bones. For example, the 13 November 1858 entry demonstrates Chambers note-taking style. "Full Meeting – almost the whole time spent in prayer – much of it very fervent. Rejoice over new prayer meetings to open and spread."<sup>168</sup> On 5 January 1859, Chambers gives a much fuller description of the prayer meeting.

Meeting crowded – A number of requests for prayers for children of pious parents being read at the opening, the remarks and prayers took much of this direction – One young man bore testimony [of] the grace of God which he had experienced last year in this room. Prayers were simple, pointed, and fervent.<sup>169</sup>

The prayer meetings often took on themes guided by what was happening in the

---

<sup>167</sup> Orr, *A Fervent Prayer*, 6.

<sup>168</sup> Talbot Chambers. 18 November 1858. *Record Book*. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 January 1859.

lives of people local and abroad. On 27 September 1858, there was great concern over the sinking of the German steamer, *Austria*.<sup>170</sup> On 30 September 1858, there was great joy expressed by the new life gained in reporting churches. Rev. Mr. Fish, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey reported the addition of 225 souls to his church through conversions and additions. Rev. Mr. Foster, pastoring a church in Beverly, Massachusetts, reported 98 new converts. Thirty-eight additions were made to Rev. Mr. Albert's church and 32 persons were added to Rev. Mr. Ritchie's congregation. The number of conversions in a prayer meeting was important. The Missions Committee of the North Dutch Church required that numbers be report to the committee.<sup>171</sup>

Jeremiah Lanphier continued to lead the prayer meetings long after God had removed the revival blessing. Prayers were still being answered, but not in the quantity as when the meetings first started. The attendance at the prayer meetings had decreased from thousands gathering in several places during the revival to an attendance ranging 30 to 60 in the consistory room in 1891.<sup>172</sup>

Lanphier faithfully lead prayer meetings until he retired in August, 1893. His reasons for stepping down were the infirmities that come with advanced age and his failing eyesight.<sup>173</sup>

During his tenure as lay missionary overseeing the prayer meetings, records were

---

<sup>170</sup> Talbot Chambers. 18 November 1858. *Record Book*. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY.

<sup>171</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. (New York: Collegiate Church Corporation, 2006) FSPM1858-0026. A hand written note was digitized among the prayer requests reminding the holder to report the number of conversions to the Missions committee.

<sup>172</sup> *Record Book*. 1891. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY. This information I observed as I looked at the numbers reflecting the attendance of that year. It is important to note that attendance numbers are not always present, especially in the early years of the *Record Books*.

<sup>173</sup> *Yearbook of the (Collegiate) Reformed Protestant Dutch Church City of New York* (New York: by Authority of the (Collegiate) Reformed Protestant Dutch Church City of New York, 1894) 84. The retirement of Lanphier was an emotional one. The depth of this emotion can be seen in minute detail recorded in tribute to Lanphier and his response.



kept and tallies were available to the Reformed Church of America Yearbook. “Mr. Horner, having examined the records of the meetings, said that the meetings numbered 11,232; over 56,000 prayers had been offered; and the written requests for prayer, besides those made verbally, numbered more than 225,000. More than half a million persons had attended.”<sup>174</sup>

### **Conclusion**

God brought this revival to the United States during a troubled time in this nation’s history. The American people were focused on the accumulation of wealth. The national debate over slavery was divisive and violent. The Federal government acted corruptly to secure self interest of the party in power. Church attendance was steadily dropping off and was even discouraged by the events of that day.

Looking at the Fulton Street Prayer Revival in its historical context one can see God at work. If the promises of God are true and God is eternally the same, then how He acted yesterday is an indication of how He will act today. It is no wonder why contemporary prayer movements are interested in this revival. But even after this revival is examined and all the truth that can be known is discovered, one question remains. Is God ready to bring another Fulton Street Prayer Revival to this country?

---

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 85.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CAN THE TESTIMONIES BE TRUSTED?

Testimonies of religious experiences often live long after the religious event is over. The following is an example of that type of testimony:

One time a man wandered into the Fulton Street meeting who intended to murder a woman and then commit suicide. He listened as someone was delivering a fervent exhortation and urging the duty of repentance. Suddenly the would-be murderer startled everyone by crying out, “Oh! What shall I do to be saved!” Just then another man arose, and with tears streaming down his cheeks asked the meeting to sing the hymn, “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me.” At the conclusion of the service both men were converted.<sup>1</sup>

In 1858, testimonies were common as newspapers, magazines, and individuals told of the wonderful works of God. The crucial factor for looking historically at the Fulton Street Prayer Revival is the recording of these accounts of changed lives. Can these testimonies be trusted?

As the research for this project progressed, it became apparent that many authors relied on the same source material. Summarizing the chronology, most authors offer a few paragraphs or a complete chapter. In addition to the basic chronology, they speak enthusiastically of the revival being directly from the hand of God. Through close examination, the sources for which the revival narratives originate come from two authors: T. W. Chambers and his book, *The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church, Fulton Street, New York: Its Origin, Character and Progress, with some of the Results*, and Samuel I. Prime and his book, *The Power of Prayer*.<sup>2</sup> Both authors were participants of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival.

---

<sup>1</sup> *America's Great Revivals* (Minneapolis, MN.: Bethany House Publishers, 1995) 57.

<sup>2</sup> Talbot W. Chambers, *The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church, Fulton Street, New York: Its Origin, Character and Progress, with some of the Results* (New York: Board of Publications of the

Kathryn Teresa Long suggests that other than the stimulating revival literature produced, this revival falls into a blind spot for religious historians, the antebellum<sup>3</sup> of the Civil War. Historians have focused largely on the political unrest, the financial panics of 1853 and 1857, abolitionism, and the examination of other trends in a larger context and have ignored the Fulton Street Prayer Revival.<sup>4</sup> Long argues that the overlooked, but stimulating revival literature needs to be examined.

Iain H. Murray suggests, “Those who comment on a revival close to its occurrence are generally inclined to over-state its significance in comparison with other movements of the Spirit of God which they themselves did not witness.”<sup>5</sup> In this situation, if an individual were to emphasize one revival over another, the individual would be forced to take one of three positions. The first is to demonstrate a bias separate from the facts. Second, the individual must overemphasize the importance of the events of the revival. Third, the individual does not have the benefit of time to validate his comparative position. Murray leans toward the third position, and this concern must be given consideration as “first hand” narratives are examined.

Another of Long’s concerns was “while Prime and Chambers represented the socially and theologically conservative stream of Calvinism, William Conant’s *Narratives of Remarkable Conversions*<sup>6</sup> portrayed the awakening from a different

---

Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, 1858), n.p. and Samuel I. Prime, *The Power of Prayer*. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998) n.p.

<sup>3</sup> A simple definition of the word “Antebellum” is “the years before.”

<sup>4</sup> Kathryn Teresa Long. *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 3-4. Long refers to the model of cyclical awakenings as a way of interpreting these events.

<sup>5</sup> Iain H. Murray. *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858* (Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth, 2002) 331.

<sup>6</sup> William C. Conant. *Narratives of Remarkable Conversions and Revival Incidents* (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1858)

point of view, as clear from both the format and the content of the book.”<sup>7</sup> Long characterized Conant’s view as seeing the revival as a national event and aligning itself with the progressive views of the North, including a strong antislavery position.<sup>8</sup> Long pulls the importance of these thoughts together by stating how these two positions would run their course in history. “Although the Reformed clergy shaped the narrative of the 1857-58 Revival for latter historians, newspapers told the story to most Americans in the spring of 1858.”<sup>9</sup> The difference in theological positions and how they inform different parts of history becomes a reason for deeper academic consideration.

Murray raises a concern which was a previous concern of J. Edwin Orr.<sup>10</sup> With Prime and Chambers informing historians and the secular press informing society about the revival, it seems odd that no definitive history has been written since the revival. Is there a book published since the revival that filled the role of definitive history?

The academic concerns raised above sets the framework for examining the transmission of the results of the revival. Generally, the question to be asked is, “Can these narratives be trusted?” An examination of this question needs to be broken down into several sub-questions. First, can we determine the concerns of those writing during the time of the revival? Second, how does the reporting of the revival by the newspapers fit into the history of journalism and what insights can be gleaned by this that would benefit this study? Third, was the definitive history of the Fulton

---

<sup>7</sup> Long, 14.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>10</sup> Murray, 332. Murray’s citation is from the manuscript of J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century* (Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989) np. Quote not found in published version.

Street Prayer Revival published in the revival aftermath?

**What were the concerns of those writing during the revival?**

The individuals chosen to answer the first sub-question are Heman Humphrey, James Waddell Alexander, Talbot Chambers, and Samuel I. Prime. As their biographies are examined, one discovers that these scholars are all respected by their colleagues and that each has written material referenced in several bibliographies from the time of the revival to the present. Considering their citations in more contemporary work, they appear to be respected by many scholars today.

**Heman Humphrey**

Heman Humphrey, “Congregational clergy man and president of Amherst College,”<sup>11</sup> was one of the first to write about the Fulton Street Prayer Revival in a historical summary. His book, *Revival Sketches and Manual*,<sup>12</sup> is one of the many books written during the decline of enthusiasm for the revival. What separated Humphrey’s work from the others were the critical questions he asked to clarify events and raise points of concern.

Humphrey felt a need to write a concise history of revivals. During his tenure as President at Amherst College, he realized that his daily responsibilities were too numerous to allow time for this undertaking which he refused to pursue with anything less than a serious approach.<sup>13</sup> After he retired from his duties at Amherst, he still felt a need to write a concise history of revival; however, after serious thought, he

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. 16-17.

<sup>12</sup>Heman Humphrey. *Revival Sketches and Manual* (New York: American Tract Society, 1859) np accessed 3 March 2005; available from <http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-dx?c=moa;idno=AFZ1028.0001.001>, no date when site was last updated.

<sup>13</sup> Humphrey, 6.

determined that he was too old to undertake this task.<sup>14</sup> He eventually changed his mind after several trusted friends and colleagues encouraged him to pursue this project.

Several points about Humphrey alluded to in the previous paragraph are important. First, he held writing this history in high regard. The topic of revival and the movements of God were not to be taken lightly. Second, he was a practical man. Humphrey knew that the demands of this undertaking would be enormous if he were to do the quality work that he desired to produce. Finally, he was a critical man. Everything was to be examined in relationship to previous revivals and the workings of God, as to whether event, and testimonies were authentic. After his volume was written, he determined that he had fallen short of his expectations, but did the best he could based on the limitations of sources that he was able to gather for this project.<sup>15</sup>

His book contains two parts. The first is a brief history of revival starting with a definition of a “revival of religion.” After he illustrates this, he provides an overview of revivals starting with biblical character of Joshua and ending with the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. “In the second part,” wrote Humphrey, “which I venture to call a Revival Manual, I have first given my view of the way in which revivals should be sought for and promoted, then inserted brief addresses such as I have been accustomed to make in seasons of the outpouring of the Spirit, and closed the volume with some Pastoral Conversations (*his emphasis*), out of which I have been permitted to hold with inquirers.”<sup>16</sup>

Humphrey defines revival as, “...the fruit or effect of Supernatural divine

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

influence, which restores the joy of God's salvation to backsliding Christians, startles the dead in trespasses and sins, convinces them of their lost and perishing condition, and makes them willing in the day of God's power."<sup>17</sup> He does not see new salvation experiences as part of revival.<sup>18</sup> Revival is a time of refreshing the body of Christ, where sins are forgiven and each Christian basks in joy of the Lord.

As Humphrey reflects on the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, he offers two important observations. First, he argues that from the date of his writing, it is too early to fully assess the fruit of this revival.<sup>19</sup> In 1859, Humphrey would not have seen the influence of this revival on the Civil War, the ministry of D. L. Moody, and on specific reforms to the Church and society.

Second, this revival was strikingly different from previous revivals. It commenced through prayer meetings<sup>20</sup> and was attended by all who wanted to attend.<sup>21</sup> Humphrey described how quickly the desire for united prayer spread from city to city as "remarkable."<sup>22</sup> The newspapers were the primary ones to chronicle the revival.<sup>23</sup> Finally, Humphrey speculated that the Fulton Street Prayer Revival had more public prayer and remarkable answers than any revival in history.<sup>24</sup>

Humphrey noted that the newspaper reporting was quite unusual. In previous years, the best way to educate casual religious readers on the revival was the production of tracts (such as the tracts produced by Rev. Austin Dickenson.)<sup>25</sup> The

---

<sup>17</sup> Humphrey, 13.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 278.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 279.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 280.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 281.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 282.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 283.

<sup>25</sup> Humphrey, 282.

religious newspapers started including stories as favors to Dickenson. As the revival commenced, several men gave money to newspapers to include more revival accounts, which lead to special daily and weekly inclusions. These increased the circulation of the paper. It was only after newspaper circulation increased that competition arose between the papers to report the revival in the minutest detail.<sup>26</sup> Humphrey was amazed at the growth of newspaper coverage of the revival. He calls this change “a great advance upon what had ever before been witnessed.”<sup>27</sup>

Humphrey wrote from a more pastoral perspective. First, he was concerned about whether each claim to conversion was real.<sup>28</sup> No time was allowed to go by before an individual’s experience was proclaimed a new birth. Second, he was concerned that if these experiences were not true conversions then the revival would not spread.<sup>29</sup> Of course, J. Edwin Orr writes about the spread of this revival reaching around the world.<sup>30</sup> Third, Humphrey was concerned about the role that clergy played in this revival.<sup>31</sup> The fact that clergy had such a small role raised concern about proper theological direction and protection from theological irregularities. This situation raised the fourth concern, the proper training of new converts.<sup>32</sup> It occurred to Humphrey that the prayer revival format left little room for any type of discipleship endeavor.

Heman Humphrey was a witness to the revival and his concerns were more practical than twentieth and twenty-first century critics. He was concerned with the

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 283.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 284.

<sup>30</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century, The 1857-1858 Awakening* (Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989) 307.

<sup>31</sup> Humphrey, 284.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 285.



authenticity of salvation experiences and the subsequent training that should follow.

### James W. Alexander

James W. Alexander's life contained the theme of revival from the time of his birth to the time of his death. His father, Archibald Alexander, was a missionary, pastor, and academic, who came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ during the aftermath of the Hampton-Sydney Revival.<sup>33</sup> When James was born, his father was the president of Hampton-Sydney College. In 1811, Archibald took a position of professor at the new Presbyterian Seminary in Princeton.<sup>34</sup> Later, after graduating from Princeton, James became a professor at Princeton where he held several positions alternating with pastoral assignments.<sup>35</sup>

Iain Murray illustrates the similarities between James and his father. In the midst of his comparison, Murray points out their similar views of revival. In doing so, Murray accomplishes two tasks. First, he demonstrates the influence of Archibald over James in the "New Measures" controversy.<sup>36</sup> Secondly, he shows that the topic of revival was vitally important to James.<sup>37</sup>

The "New Measures" controversy focused on the "manipulative" actions of Charles Finney and others in "coercing" sinners into salvation experiences that were more emotional than eternal.<sup>38</sup> According to Murray, the "New Measures" did not

---

<sup>33</sup> Earle E. Cairns. *An Endless Line of Splendor: Revivals and Their Leaders from the Great Awakening to the Present* (Wheaton, IL.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1986) 98.

<sup>34</sup> *A Concise Cyclopedia of Religious Knowledge: Biblical, Biographical, Geographical, Historical, Practical, and Theological.* sv. "Alexander, Archibald" by Elias Benjamin Sanford, ed. (Hartford, CT.: The S. S. Scranton Co., 1906) 21.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* sv. "Alexander, James Waddell"

<sup>36</sup> Murray, 336.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

<sup>38</sup> The language chosen well presents the position of the "Old School." Authentic salvation experiences were the most important point, since that has eternal ramifications. The "New Measures" position would include using any measure that would assist the sinner in moving from disbelief to the Kingdom

originate with Finney, but rather had been adapted from Methodist meetings with some antics only employed early in Finney's ministry.<sup>39</sup> Murray describes these "New Measures" as,

The encouragement of physical responses to preaching (such as falling on the floor); women speaking in worship; meetings carried on through long hours and on successive days (protracted meetings); and, above all, inviting individuals to "submit to God" and to prove it by "humbling action as standing up, kneeling down, or coming forward to 'the anxious seat...'"<sup>40</sup>

Those who represented the "Old School," which included both Alexanders, maintained a concern about the authenticity of such measures in securing genuine conversions. As previously mentioned, Heman Humphrey expressed his concern about the eternal endurance of the salvation experiences during the Fulton Street Prayer Revivals. Only decisions for salvation that were eternal were acceptable. All others decisions must be guarded against.

Although the influence of his father is seen in his belief system, Alexander was not easily influenced. Murray suggests, "While James Alexander was close to his father, he never surrendered his own judgment and came his own way to his convictions."<sup>41</sup> He was cautious in forming an opinion and he carefully thought through his position until he arrived at a position that made sense. Although he detested controversy, Alexander was capable of seeing the value in other theological positions and holding them equally right as his own. He was a man of thoughtful

---

of God. Murray states one side of the debate, but the debate is still continuing today. In his research, this writer came upon a Th.M. thesis from Western Seminary that discuss the theological framework of Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney in light of the "New Measures" controversy. Rick Bourque. *Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney: A Comparison of their Theology of Revival* (Th. M. thesis, Western Seminary) np.

<sup>39</sup> Murray, 242

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 334.

study. Murray saw much of this illustrated through the letters of James Alexander later edited by John Hall.<sup>42</sup>

The Fulton Street Prayer Revival was unique for James Alexander for many reasons. Alexander had a personal connection to the revival through Jeremiah Lanphier, God's servant in bringing this revival. Lanphier was part of Alexander's congregation at the Brick Presbyterian Church, before he became an inner city missionary in New York City.

In continuing with the influence of revival on James Alexander's life, he was a student of previous revivals. For many years, he preached on it in the churches in which he pastored. In addition, Alexander compiled a number of pamphlets which he authored into a book, which included a preface of his reflections and narrative of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival.<sup>43</sup>

Examining this preface closely, Alexander makes it clear that he is unsure of the sequence of events that led to the revival, but assures the reader that it came from the "loving-kindness" of God in a time that pleased Him.<sup>44</sup> Continuing this thought he states, "It is not the place for a history, nor shall any thing of the kind be attempted. Ample histories of the Revival can be expected from the competent pens of the Rev. Dr. Prime and the Rev. Dr. Chambers."<sup>45</sup> It is important to point out that a man like Alexander, who Murray describes as cautious in creating an opinion and difficult to influence, put his faith in the integrity and ability of both Chambers and Prime to

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. referencing John Hall ed. *Forty Years' Familiar Letters of James W. Alexander, D. D. Constituting, With the Notes, A Memoir of his Life* (New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1870.) np.

<sup>43</sup> James W. Alexander. *The Revival and its Lessons: a Collection of Fugitive Papers Having Reference to the Great Awakening, 1858* (New York: American Tract Society, 1858) vol. 1, p. 32.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 7. The second sentence is found in Alexander's footnote.

accurately describe the Revival.

One concern that Alexander raises is the proper reporting of salvation experiences. “The statistics of conversion are sometimes unsafe; where there is so much room for mistake and exaggeration, it may be wisest to venture no figures.”<sup>46</sup> He makes this statement in light of the many denominations experiencing growth. Recognizing that conversions are happening around the world, his statement captures the inability he feels to accurately place a numerical value on the ingathering of the spiritual harvest.

To capture the essence of this revival, Alexander lists nine characteristics. First, this revival was from God and not human planning.<sup>47</sup> Second, since this revival was from God, His presence was felt. “Decorous stillness, reverent waiting upon God, and a tender sense of the heavenly presence, have marked many of these delightful assemblages.”<sup>48</sup> Third, the revival happened among God’s people. Many backslidden Christians were spiritually reawakened and recommitted themselves to the Lord.<sup>49</sup> Fourth, the revival was a prayer revival. There was a passionate desire to approach God with every need and concern.<sup>50</sup> Fifth, there was a unity among believers of different denominations. Many points of division were set aside to commune together as saints.<sup>51</sup> Sixth, the leaders of this revival were lay leaders. The observation was made that “no prominence has been given to particular men, or distinguished gifts of learning or eloquence.”<sup>52</sup> Seventh, this revival was worldwide.<sup>53</sup> Concluding with the

---

<sup>46</sup> Alexander, 8.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 12.

final two, the influence of Holy Spirit was evident and “salvation (was) through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>54</sup>

Looking at the assemblies of people responding to Jesus, committing themselves to the Savior and to prayer, and experiencing new spiritual heights, it seemed to Alexander that these people were being prepared for something.<sup>55</sup>

Alexander would never know the truth of that observation. He died on July 31, 1859. He would never know the impact of these renewed Christians’ influence on the Civil war. He would not know the ministry of D. L. Moody, who was profoundly touched by this revival in Chicago, nor would he know the new social ministries that would develop from this revival.

#### Talbot W. Chambers

Talbot Wilson Chambers was one of the pastors at the Collegiate Dutch Church during the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. Chambers studied at Rutgers College, New Brunswick Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and finally earned his Doctor of Sacred Theology degree from Columbia College in 1853. Before becoming a pastor at the Collegiate Dutch Church, he pastored the Second Reformed Church in Somerville, New Jersey.<sup>56</sup>

James Alexander believed Chambers could do a competent job recounting the events of the revival. Since Chambers was one of the pastors of the church where the prayer meetings started, he seemed like a natural choice. Chambers went on to author

---

<sup>53</sup> Alexander, 13.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Sanford, sv. “Chambers, Talbot Wilson”

several books on biblical topics, including *Memoir of Theodore Frelinghuysen*,<sup>57</sup> and was an assistant editor of a *Dictionary of Religious Knowledge*.<sup>58</sup> However, Chambers' first book was his account of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. The Executive Committee of the Board of Publication of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church passed a resolution asking Chambers to write a history of the Noon Prayer Meetings.<sup>59</sup> Chambers accepted and wrote his history with a comprehensive background.

In the early chapters of the book, he established the identity of the Dutch Protestant Reformed Church and aligned this denomination with the early worship of God in the colony of New York. Briefly, he discussed the establishment of the Dutch Protestant Reformed Church congregation and its growth. This church eventually split, because of overwhelming growth, and Chambers focused his narrative on the establishment of the North Dutch Church. In providing this brief history, he demonstrated the personal impact that the changing population and the growth patterns of New York City had on the church where he pastored. This history set the framework for the counter impact of the noon prayer meetings.

In the following chapters, Chambers described the revival in detail. Included in this history was a description of Lamphier and his beginning work, the decision to create a prayer meeting, the explosive growth in attendance, how it spread throughout the city, and then beyond the city. He included testimonies, prayer requests,

---

<sup>57</sup> Talbot W. Chambers. *Memoir of the life and character of the late Hon. Theo. Frelinghuysen. LL.D.* (New York : Harper & Brothers, 1863) np.

<sup>58</sup> Samuel Macauley Jackson. *The Concise Dictionary of Religious Knowledge and Gazetteer* (New York : The Christian Literature Co., 1889) np.

<sup>59</sup> Talbot W. Chambers. *The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church, Fulton Street, New York*, 7.

newspaper articles, and characteristics of the revival.

Chambers described several characteristics of the revival. First, revival came from the hand of God.<sup>60</sup> The complete change in the interests of humans, the rapid growth, the devotion to prayer, and the abundant claims of salvation experiences can only demonstrate the hand of God. Second, there was true Christian Unity.<sup>61</sup> Controversial issues were not allowed to disrupt the gathering,<sup>62</sup> people of different denominations worshipped and prayed along side each other, and no group was exalted above any other. Third, the leaders were all laymen.<sup>63</sup> This was a cause of great concern for many clergy attending the meetings. If clergy were not leading the prayer meetings, who would make sure that everything is done according to scripture? God moved effectively as He led the laity and as he governed the services. The fourth characteristic, Chambers noted, was the power of prayer.<sup>64</sup> Prayer was the focus of the meetings and answers were plentiful and powerful. This listing of characteristics appears similar to those suggested by Humphrey and Alexander.

Chambers saw his role as that of a narrator of the events. He never sat in judgment of how things happened or how things differed from other revivals. However, he did include two cautions. The first concern focused on the need for discipleship that the formal clergy could provide.<sup>65</sup> For someone to have a life-changing experience in a noon prayer meeting and then to disregard growing into Christian maturity, was detrimental to that individual's spiritual health. The second

---

<sup>60</sup> Talbot W. Chambers. *The New York City Noon Day Meeting* (Colorado Springs, CO.: Wagner Publications, 2002), 117.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>62</sup> Should anyone bring up a theology that would divide the gathering, they were quickly interrupted and either asked to sit down or to move on to a different topic of exhortation.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 132.

concern was that only the Noon Prayer Meetings possessed enough faith to see the miraculous happen as the result of prayer.<sup>66</sup> Chambers suggested that this was contrary to the very definition of faith and although he did not illustrate his point, the rapid spread of the prayer meeting around the world amply proves his point.

Throughout his book, Chambers spoke highly of the press. In his view, when the editors recognized the significance of events surrounding revival, they sent reporters to cover the story. The accounts of revivals were carried in several journals,<sup>67</sup> thus Chambers credited the press for making the Fulton Street Prayer revival as popular in England as it was in the United States.<sup>68</sup> In addition, he was grateful to the *Christian Intelligencer* for their thorough coverage of the first anniversary ceremonies.<sup>69</sup> As part of the many testimonies of conversion included in his book, he included a story of a newspaper reporter with no religious interest who wandered into one of the prayer gatherings and found salvation.<sup>70</sup>

Chambers spoke at the thirtieth anniversary of the revival, and a written copy of his address was archived.<sup>71</sup> This historical retrospect makes it possible to see what his concerns about the revival were thirty years later. Chambers used this discourse to remind the crowd of the history of the prayer meetings and to revisit the spiritual depths of the communion with God that those in prayer were experiencing. He

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>67</sup> Chambers, *The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church, Fulton Street, New York: Its Origin, Character and Progress, with some of the Results*. 73.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., viii.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>71</sup> Talbot W. Chambers, "The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church." (A Discourse presented at the thirtieth anniversary of the Daily Noon Prayer Meetings at the Collegiate Church, New York, New York, 23 September 1887.) available from <http://www.rca.org/aboutus/archives/chambersfulton.pdf>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2005. np. No date when site was last updated.



reminded the crowd of the characteristics of the revival and shared some simple observations and testimonies to support his points.

In the midst of his discourse, he shared some of his concerns. According to Chambers, James Alexander complained that the Bible was being ignored in these meetings. A sermon series was started and continued through the revival.<sup>72</sup> The sermons were delivered by different preachers; however, most of the prayer meetings remained informal.

One of the readers of this author's work and Senior Pastor of the Richmond Community Church of God in Portland, Oregon, Rev. Douglas C. Boldt, raised a concern inquiring how much of the growth from these prayer meetings was the result of a "band-wagon" mentality. Chambers, in his description of the characteristics of the prayer meetings, expressed that curiosity may have been the initial motivation for a few coming to the prayer meetings in the beginning, but it did not "account for the constancy of the attendance or the depth of feeling that was exhibited."<sup>73</sup>

Perhaps the greatest concern for Chambers, was the attack made on the spiritual exercise of prayer since the revival. In 1872 in Great Britain, a debate had begun over efficacy of prayer in aiding the recovery of the hospitalized. The prayer-gauge was an experiment to compare time of recovery between two wards, of which one was covered with intercessory prayer and the other was prayed over by the patients and their families.<sup>74</sup> In many ways, this experiment intended to show the

---

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>74</sup> Prof. Tyndall, Francis Galton and Others against Dr. Littledale, President McCosh, The Duke of Argyll, Canon Lyddon, and "*The Spectator*." *The Prayer-Gauge Debate* (Boston, MA.: Congregational Publishing Society, 1876) available from <http://name.umd.umich.edu/AGA3363>; Internet; assessed 27 July 2005. 24. No date when site was last updated.

supremacy of science over prayer. Chambers' response to this was, "it did not appear that the faith of even one believer was shaken or in any degree affected by this plausible proposal."<sup>75</sup>

### Samuel I. Prime

Samuel Prime was born on November 4, 1812. and spent his boyhood attending the Presbyterian Church where his father pastored. At age fourteen, he entered Williams College and graduated before he was seventeen years old. Continuing his education, he studied theology at Princeton Seminary. In 1833, he was licensed to preach and so he immediately began preaching. He was ordained in 1835. That same year, he started his ministry as pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Ballston Spa, New York. He preached there for a little over a year before resigning for health reasons. In 1837, Prime became the pastor in Matteawan, New York. His ministry lasted there for three years before he resigned for health reasons.<sup>76</sup> In 1840, he became the editor of *The New York Observer*.<sup>77</sup> Later, he authored several books and became the proprietor of *The New York Observer*. As an author and editor, it was felt by some that he achieved a position of trust and influence in religious circles.<sup>78</sup>

*The Power of Prayer*<sup>79</sup> was his first book catapulting him to the significant role as historian of the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings. Prime was encouraged by his future publisher to write about the prayer meetings, the presence of revival, and their

---

<sup>75</sup> Chambers, "*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*" 13.

<sup>76</sup> Wendall Prime, ed. *Samuel Irenæus Prime: Autobiography and Memorials* (New York: Anson D. F. Rudolph and Company, 1888.) iii-iv.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, iv.

<sup>78</sup> Sanford, sv. "*Prime, Samuel Irenæus.*" 769.

<sup>79</sup> Samuel Irenæus Prime, *The Power of Prayer*. np.

effects.<sup>80</sup> The book was hurriedly put together and was published roughly one year from the origination of the prayer meetings. Long after the revival fervor died down, answers to prayer were still being experienced in the Fulton Street meetings under the leadership of Jeremiah Lanphier. Prime followed the *The Power of Prayer* with a book at the five year mark, *Five Years of Prayers with the Answers*,<sup>81</sup> at the fifteen year mark, *Fifteen Years of Prayer in the Fulton Street Meeting*,<sup>82</sup> and the twenty-five year mark, *Prayer and its Answers Illustrated in the First Twenty-Five Years of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting*.<sup>83</sup>

Prime's goal was more than a historical account of the prayer meetings. He wanted to show the power of God at work when God's people aligned their hearts with His and prayed. In each book, he reported several testimonies of people from different walks of life. In addition, each volume included a taste of the historical accounts in varying lengths. The historical narratives provided a framework to show God's power to answer prayers.

Spread out over several chapters, Prime identified several characteristics of the prayer meetings. First, the presence of God was strongly felt.<sup>84</sup> Second, they were filled with love. Prime described it as "...love to Christ, love for all his people, love of prayer, and love of personal effort."<sup>85</sup> Third, there was a unity of believers. No

---

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., xiii.

<sup>81</sup> Samuel I. Prime. *Five Years of Prayers with the Answer*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1864) np.

<sup>82</sup> Samuel I. Prime, *Fifteen Years of Prayer in the Fulton Street Meeting* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low, & Seagle, 1872) np.

<sup>83</sup> Samuel I. Prime. *Prayer and its Answer Illustrated in the First Twenty-Five Years of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882) np.

<sup>84</sup> Prime, *The Power of Prayer*, 12.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 11.

distinction was made between members of different denominations.<sup>86</sup> Fourth, there was a lack of emotionalism.<sup>87</sup> There was a sense of seriousness present at the meetings. Fifth, there was a distinct attitude exhibited by those praying. Among those praying, each possessed humility, and yet, each boldly made their prayers known to God.<sup>88</sup> Each possessed a deep desire to pray<sup>89</sup> and when they prayed, they believed that God heard their prayers and was going to answer them.<sup>90</sup> Lastly, the leadership of the prayer meetings was performed by the laity.<sup>91</sup> Prime speculates that if the clergy had been used to lead the prayer meetings, they would have been overburdened by the responsibilities and they would not have asked for help with their other responsibilities.<sup>92</sup>

Prime did include newspaper coverage in his book. He included a couple of entries from Lanphier's diary that showed that Lanphier contacted the religious papers on 23 October 1857<sup>93</sup> and the secular press on 5 January 1858<sup>94</sup> encouraging their interest in the prayer meetings and the results. Prime demonstrated that newspaper reports encouraged the attendance at the prayer meetings,<sup>95</sup> and felt that the newspaper coverage of the revival results, sermons, and other revival information by both secular and religious press glorified God.<sup>96</sup>

Drawing on information from the biographies and writings of these four

---

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>89</sup> Prime, 16.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 213-4.

churchmen, answering the question, “what were the concerns of those writing during the time of the revival?” becomes less complicated. Their concerns centered primarily on pastoral issues and the true condition of those claiming salvation. Their pastoral concerns included the absence of the clergy leadership in the revival, the absence of discipleship, and the absence of the preached word. The second concern was whether the salvation experiences were real, since the testimonies of changed lives did not have the benefit of time to see what percentage were true conversions.

In the broad sense of this study, none of the four churchmen examined had anything negative to say about the newspaper coverage. Three of the four churchmen felt that the newspaper coverage assisted in the growth of the revival. In addition, the three spoke of the newspaper coverage as a tribute to the glory of God.

The publishing of their books speaks to the value of the testimonies. Although, both Prime and Chambers wrote their initial offerings rather hurriedly, Prime published follow-up works at the five, fifteen, and twenty-five year marks from the origin of the prayer meetings. Long<sup>97</sup> focuses on William C. Conant’s work<sup>98</sup> because, according to Long, it has escaped the molding of the “collective social memory”<sup>99</sup> created by Prime and Chambers. Long refers to Conant who credits the *Tribune* with much of the testimonies he includes in his book. In 1875, Matthew Hale Smith wrote *Marvels of Prayer*<sup>100</sup> in which each chapter started with a passage of scripture and ended with a testimony from the prayer meetings. The testimonies have stood the test of time.

---

<sup>97</sup> Long, 14.

<sup>98</sup> William C. Conant. np.

<sup>99</sup> Long, 12.

<sup>100</sup> Matthew Hale Smith. *Marvels of Prayer: Illustrated by the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting with Leaves from the Tree of Life* (New York: Evangelical Publishing Company, 1875) np.

**How does the reporting of the revival by the newspapers fit into the history of journalism and what insights can be gleaned by this that would benefit this study?**<sup>101</sup>

The Fulton Street Prayer Revival occurred during a time of innovation in American journalism. Edwin Emery, Professor of Journalism at the University of Minnesota, argued that three developmental factors made these mid-nineteenth century decades a time of innovation.<sup>102</sup> The first factor was growing fascination with human interest stories.<sup>103</sup> This development was seen as a new niche among the reading, common man of the early 1830s. The second factor was the improvement of communication of the news. For many years, news was moved from place to place by Pony Express and by sailing ships. By the 1840s, the railroad had taken on the bulk of the communication load. In 1845, steamships were used to move news across the ocean and through national waterways. In 1844, the development of the telegraph and use of Morse Code enhanced communication. With the development of the telegraph came the beginning of the centralized news agency. In the 1860s, the Associated Press was established.<sup>104</sup> The third factor was the improvement of the printing press. Richard Hoe created a revolving type printing press, which made printing the paper faster.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> The credit of the answer to this question must be given to Kathryn Teresa Long and her chapter 2 *Revivalism and the News* from her book. Her work seems to cover some new ground as I didn't find any history of religious journalism. Her treatment of the *Herald* and the *Tribune* seem very thorough although I was unable to verify her source due to my own challenge of resources. A good example would be her use of Russell E. Francis' Ph. D. dissertation where she drew Greeley's attempt to use the revival to influence the religious to his political views. Her work seems ground breaking, but I was unable to explore bias.

Russell E. Francis. *Pentecost: 1858, A study in Religious Revivalism*. Ph. D. diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 1948.) np.

<sup>102</sup> Edwin Emery, *The Press and America, an Interpretative History of Journalism* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1962) 245.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 246.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 251-255.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 258.

Willard Grosvenor Bleyer, director of the School of Journalism and Professor of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin, felt that the most interesting outgrowth of experimenting with human interest stories was the “*penny papers*.” Penny Papers sold for one or two cents a piece, as opposed to the six cents charged by the more mainline newspapers of the time. The penny papers were aimed at the middle class and covered topics such as union news, women workers issues, and the right to vote for a larger portion of the population.<sup>106</sup> Bleyer writes, “The two most popular features of the American penny papers were the humorous treatment of police news and court news, the reports of more or less criminal trials, borrowed from the English Press.”<sup>107</sup>

The penny papers in England were similar in content, but were published as magazines. During this period in England, there was a tax on all newspapers and publishing news in the form of a magazine was one way to avoid the tax and keep the cost of their news product at two cents. In 1832 in England, 200,000 subscriptions were sold, outselling the mainline papers. Similar figures were recorded the following year in the United States.<sup>108</sup>

As time went on, changes were made to the penny papers in the United States. Summarizing those changes, Bleyer writes,

Thus, by 1840 the penny papers, suggested by the success of cheap periodicals in England, and having as their principal feature humorous police court stories and reports of criminal trials imitated from English newspapers, had become well established in the United States. By eliminating political news and political editorials, and by substituting for them entertaining and sensation

---

<sup>106</sup> Willard Grosvenor Bleyer. *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927) 155.

<sup>107</sup> Bleyer, 156.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 155.

news, with editorials on such “moral” topics as intemperance and gambling, they were able to secure almost immediately circulations greater than those of all the “respectable six-penny papers” combined.<sup>109</sup>

With the rise of human interest stories, opportunities were created for topics related to religion to be printed in the press. Several penny papers were focused on the religious niche in the market. Including the religious weekly papers published during this time, the religious press was the largest group of papers. According to Frank Luther Mott, “The religious group was the largest of these class periodicals; every denomination and every school of thought within a denomination must have its organ, and many had one for each city or state or region. Thus, each of the leading denominations had a score or more periodicals-quarterly, monthly, and weekly-before 1860.”<sup>110</sup> Long describes the religious press this way:

The Revival of 1857-58 took place at a time when weekly religious papers, usually identified with a particular denomination, enjoyed substantial circulation of their own. With more than 100 weeklies serving a total of approximately 400,000 subscribers, Protestants were very much a part of what would be described in 1860 as “a newspaper-reading nation.”<sup>111</sup>

Long argues that Christians expected to read about the revival from their religious papers, but reading about the revival in secular press was something different.<sup>112</sup>

During this time period, two newspapermen, James Gordon Bennett and Horace Greeley, wanted to make their newspapers the most popular, influential, and profitable. Their papers became rivals, and Long describes these two men as ushering

---

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>110</sup> Frank Luther Mott. *American Journalism: A History: 1690-1960* (New York: The Macmillan Company 1962) 321-2.

<sup>111</sup> Long, 27.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.



“in modern journalism.”<sup>113</sup>

Long points out that the newspapers had catered to the “political and commercial elite.”<sup>114</sup> Bennett, who started the *New York Herald* in 1835, saw that by capitalizing on human interest stories, his paper could appeal to a much broader readership. Over the next two decades, because of Bennett’s marketing abilities, the *New York Herald* had developed a larger readership from all parts of society. Long writes of the paper’s development, “In the 1850s he (Bennett) had a well-established reputation as one of the most powerful and irreverent voices in American journalism. He took an independent political stance, adopted a lively and often sarcastic writing style, and broadened the traditional definition of the news.”<sup>115</sup>

Bennett saw the *Herald* as presenting news that is important now. Religious fervor was fine for the moment, but its coverage would end when the fervor ended. For example, Bennett saw gossip as “a marketable commodity.”<sup>116</sup> Long portrays Bennett’s attitude towards religious topics as “exposing fanaticism and the hypocrisy of the religious elites,” especially when scandals and sex were involved.<sup>117</sup> He “focused on the news-gathering function of the press rather than its role as teacher or moral guardian of society.”<sup>118</sup>

Greeley’s paper, the *Tribune* developed an opposing viewpoint. Horace Greeley was part of the Whig political party and used the *Tribune* to further his political agenda. Greeley wanted the *Tribune* to be the moral voice in society.

---

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Mott

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

According to Long, “‘The *Tribune*,’ Greeley announced, ‘will labor to advance the interests of the People, and to promote the Moral, Social, and Political well-being.’”<sup>119</sup> While Bennett, described as a “prototypical Jacksonian,” supported slavery, Greeley supported abolition.

The role of newspapers in the Fulton Street Prayer Revival was influential, although, not without some initial hesitation. For two decades, newspapers experimented with religious stories and never saw much interest from the reading public, reflected in increased circulation. Many religious papers ran stories of the revival as a favor to Rev. Austin Dickenson.<sup>120</sup> In addition, Jeremiah Lanphier contacted the religious and secular press about covering the revival.<sup>121</sup> Only after the secular press saw the profitability in reporting events surrounding the revival, did they put effort into its coverage. However, the rivalry between the *Herald* and the *Tribune* acted as a catalyst.

Long suggests that only after the revival did the secular press attempt to shape the way that the public viewed religious figures. Individuals like “D. L. Moody, E. P. Hammond, Sam Jones, Billy Sunday, Aimee Semple McPherson, and Billy Graham” have had images created by the press.<sup>122</sup>

The Fulton Street Prayer Revival happened during a time in journalism history when there was experimentation with human interest stories. When the newspaper realized that there were profits to be made, they became interested in reporting the revival stories, writing to attract new readers. Only after the revival was over, did the

---

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. 31.

<sup>120</sup> Humphrey, 282.

<sup>121</sup> Prime, *The Power of Prayer*. 11,17.

<sup>122</sup> Long, 29.

press start creating images of religious leaders.

**Was the definitive history of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival published in the revival aftermath?**

Murray was quoting Orr from what was, at that time, an unpublished manuscript, when he stated, “In 125 years no definitive history of the 1857 – 58 Awakening has been written.”<sup>123</sup> This may have been the driving issue that caused Orr to write, *The Event of the Century*.<sup>124</sup> Orr gathers together a large amount of important new information of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, including the revival outbreaks focusing on other states and regions, on denominations, on colleges, and then the effects of revival on the Civil war. He was trying to put together a volume that would answer questions of new life and reform. This book of Orr’s did take the reform issues a step further than the works of Prime and Chambers, benefiting from 125 years of history.

From his statement of lacking a definitive work, it could be understood that Orr sensed a need for a new work to be published that would gather together more post-revival information and then addressed this need by writing *The Event of the Century*. If the concern were expressed as above, then there is no reason for the work of Prime and Chambers’ to enter into the conversation.

However, the concern is that “In 125 years no definitive history of the 1857 – 58 Awakening has been written.”<sup>125</sup> It would seem that the work of Prime has been overlooked. An examination of *The Power of Prayer* will illustrate how it fits the role of definitive history.

---

<sup>123</sup> Murray, 332. Murray’s citation is from the manuscript of J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century* (Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989) np. Quote not found in published version.

<sup>124</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century* (Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989) np.

<sup>125</sup> Murray, 332. citing J. Edwin Orr. Quote not found in published version.

Prime and Chambers have been used by most books on revival in the bibliography as the source of history about the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. Long puts Prime and Chambers into a group she describes as “reformed clergy” and then states that “the Reformed clergy shaped the narrative of the 1857-58 Revival for later historians.”<sup>126</sup> Comparing the work of Prime and Chambers, the body of Prime’s work is much more extensive.

Prime recounts that Charles Scribner had asked him to write a book on the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings,<sup>127</sup> a book that enjoyed wider circulation than any religious book of that day. It was reprinted in London and distributed throughout Scotland and Ireland. A copy was given to every family of certain villages.<sup>128</sup> Two different editions were released in French and an edition was released in the Dutch language. Over the last 125 years, this book has seen several different editions, including the latest versions copyrighted in 1991 and 1998 by Banner of Truth Trust. The publishers of these last two editions attribute Dr. David Martin Lloyd-Jones for requesting this book be republished before his death in 1981.<sup>129</sup>

Prime’s motivation for writing was to present testimonies of answers to prayer.<sup>130</sup> To glorify God by telling of the Power of Prayer in the lives of individuals gave him joy. After the publication of *The Power of Prayer*, he received several letters back from individuals who read the book and experienced similar answers to

---

<sup>126</sup> Long, 27.

<sup>127</sup> Samuel I. Prime, *Prayer and its Answer Illustrated in the First Twenty-Five Years of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting*. 13.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. 14.

<sup>129</sup> Samuel Prime. *The Power of Prayer* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998) xii.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., xiii.

prayer.<sup>131</sup>

Considering the book, *The Power of Prayer*, its distribution, the dependence on this book by historians, clergy, and theologians, its reprints, and the changed lives of its readers, *The Power of Prayer* has filled the role of definitive work.

### **Conclusion**

The larger question of this chapter was “Can the testimonies be trusted?” In getting the proper information, this question needed to be broken down into three sub-questions. After answering the sub-questions, the study needs to be refocused on the larger question.

Based on the responses of Heman Humphrey, James W. Alexander, Samuel I. Prime, and Talbot Chambers, can the testimonies be trusted? Although many of the concerns these men expressed centered on pastoral issues, two concerns regarding the specific testimonies remain. First, were the testimonies “eternal” or “emotional?” On the whole, the prayer meetings were not emotional, but spiritually captivating. God’s movement in the prayer meetings changed lives.

Second, Alexander spoke of the exaggeration of numbers of salvation and rededication experiences. In his view, it is impossible to come close to the proper number, so it would be better not to venture a guess. Even the records drawn upon by Orr would not provide a complete accounting, so it might seem best to leave the numbered souls to the Lamb’s Book of Life. On the other hand, it is important to understand the quantity of the divine impact of the revival. The four churchmen would agree that the testimonies could be trusted, as long as the concerns they raised

---

<sup>131</sup> Samuel I. Prime, *Prayer and its Answer Illustrated in the First Twenty-Five Years of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting*. 14-15.

were kept in mind.

In the light of the newspapers and journalism history, can the testimonies be trusted? The newspapers were experimenting with human interest stories, and no effort was made on their part to manipulate or mold the testimonies of the revival. These stories only proved to be worth reporting after the revival was underway, when newspapers saw the profit. After the revival was over, the newspaper realized that they could create images for church men and women.

Religious leaders in the mid-nineteenth century were thrilled to see reports of the revival in the secular press. In addition, they saw that the newspaper coverage stimulated the attendance at the prayer meetings. It was the power of God that kept people returning to the prayer meeting. Considering the secular press coverage, the fact that the revival was reported in a positive light, and that it aided the attendance of the prayer meetings, many leaders considered the role of the press as evidence of God's Spirit moving. Considering the role of the press, yes, the testimonies can be trusted.

To address whether these testimonies can be trusted in the light of 125 years without someone writing a definitive history, Samuel I. Prime's *The Power of Prayer* seems to have filled the role as a definitive history. The book was translated into several languages. It went through several editions including modern reprints. This book was used to inform many people of the revival.

Prime's motivation for writing was so that many would hear what God was doing in answering prayers. The testimonies were read, believed and replicated by those who would pray in faith. Reports came rolling in about those who were

similarly touched by reading the testimonies and putting them into action. Taking into account that those testimonies were used by God long after the revival was over would confirm that the testimonies can be trusted.

In closing, here is a testimony that is an example of a changed life.

One poor fellow, a sailor, who was convinced of his sins, and who flew to Christ for a refuge, was met by the missionary at his boarding-house as he was packing his chest for sea. The landlord was quite busy filling up some jars of liquor, which he placed in each chest for a sea stock, charging it to Jack, of course, and insisted on placing one in the chest of the inquiring sailor; but he refused, and persisted in the refusal, notwithstanding the repeated solicitations of the landlord and his wife; and, looking at the missionary, said, with much feeling: *“I would rather take your PRAYERS to sea with me, than all the rum in the world.”* (font emphasis his)<sup>132</sup>

The previous testimony demonstrates not only how this sailor acted when convicted of his sins, but also the change in his heart in reference to liquor. He would rather return to sea with the knowledge that this missionary was praying for him than a bottle from the landlord. In essence, the sailor was soliciting the prayers of the missionary. This presents another question that is important for this study. What were the prayer requests like during the revival years of the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings?

---

<sup>132</sup> Prime. *The Power of Prayer*. 150.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HEARING THE VOICES OF THE PRAYER REQUESTS

One of the unique vestiges of the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings is the letters requesting prayer for the concerns on the senders' hearts. The preservation of these requests is unique to the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings, since in most revivals, the focus is placed on the answered prayer recognizing what God has done. The requests preserved the spiritual desperation on hearts of the people and challenges of the human condition.

The Archives of the Collegiate Church Corporation possesses two volumes of prayer requests with the first volume dating 1858-1859 and the second dating 1860-1861. The requests contained in the volume dated 1858-1859 start with the month of September of 1858. This volume [of written requests] contains approximately two thousand written requests. This sampling contains enough requests to make observations of many pertinent points of the prayer meetings and the revival years.

Jim Philbin, a member of the Archives of Collegiate Church Corporation staff, electronically photographed the requests attempting to preserve them from further deterioration. This is a significant work, since the typical deterioration of time has already commenced. The ink is fading. The paper is yellowing and becoming brittle. Similarly, when Oberlin College was approached through interlibrary loan to retrieve *The Oberlin Evangelist* articles for this project, their librarian stated that their previous means of preservation, microfilm and microfiche, were in a state of decay



and readable copies would difficult to create.<sup>1</sup> State of the art preservation, like Philbin work, needs to be applied to all decaying documents of the revival before these documents are lost.

These prayer requests are sacred because they were requested and prayed for in the task of intercessory prayer. This attribute of the prayer requests requires that they be treated with respect, even though they will be closely examined.

### **Initial Observations of the Prayer Requests**

Several observations can be made from close examination of the requests. The first observation can be ascertained from the fact the all these prayer requests were sent to the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting. This demonstrates an eternal truth of the Christian life, that when the Lord is found, individuals in need will do whatever it takes to make the concerns known to Him and get what they need from Him. The story of the woman bleeding for twelve years from Luke 8:43-48 illustrates this human pattern:

<sup>43</sup> And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. <sup>44</sup> She came up behind him (Jesus) and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. <sup>45</sup> “Who touched me?” Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.” <sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.” <sup>47</sup> Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. <sup>48</sup> Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”<sup>2</sup>

In a similar way to the woman pushing through the crowd to get to Jesus, these prayer requests arrived at the prayer meetings. This is illustrated in the following prayer

---

<sup>1</sup> This is the experience of the writer of this project. However, Oberlin College was successful at providing readable copies of the requested periodical.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 8:43-48, NIV.

request. “Brothers and Sisters of the Fulton St. Prayer Meeting, having heard and read of the efficacy [sic] of prayer practiced in your vineyard, and doubting not God’s willingness to answer even if the subject was far from you, and believeing [sic] fully [sic] that God will hear and answer if we ask right, *(the request was presented here)*.”<sup>3</sup>

The intention of the requester is seen in the observation that prayers are being answered in the prayer meetings, and that he would like to request the prayer meeting to offer a believing prayer on his behalf. For the requester, if he could get his request to the prayer meetings, his prayers would be answered, just like the woman from Luke 8 needed only to touch the edge of Jesus’ cloak to be healed. Jesus described this as an act of faith.

A second observation is that distance is not a hindrance to revival. Obviously, prayer requests were sent to the prayer meetings from all over the country. However, God’s Spirit is active at the source of the requests. As an example, consider the prayer request from the town of Jasper, Tennessee. The requester describes a spiritually difficult environment:

Jasper is a small village (although the county seat) and rather secluded among the mountains. There [sic] very seldom preaching there of any sort oftener than once in three weeks – frequently none for months together. But with all these disadvantages they enjoyed a precious revival last April. The subjects were mostly female and early in May the first female prayer meeting was held in the place and it is still held weekly with diminished interest, attended statedly by three-fourths of the adult females in the villages.<sup>4</sup>

The seclusion of the town among the mountains, as the author suggests, could explain the rarity of a preaching service. With the lack of a regular preaching service, the

---

<sup>3</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. (New York: Collegiate Church Corporation, 2006) FSPM1858-0006.

<sup>4</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM1858-0010.

townspeople would not experience the regular impact of a community of faith in their town. The women appear to be carrying the spiritual burden for the town, which is illustrated by the author describing them attending the prayer meetings. The spiritual war appears to be between their seclusion and the Holy Spirit prompting their hearts to have prayer meeting like Fulton Street Prayer Meetings. The side against the revival has gained some ground in the author's comment that the prayer meetings have "diminished interest." On the side for the revival, the author has sent a prayer request to Fulton Street for their intercession. The spiritual battle is raging in a self-proclaimed "isolated place" like Jasper.

The third observation is the serious, yet sensitive attitude applied to the role of intercessory prayer. The following note was written at the top of a prayer request.

NB This request was read in the meeting today, Jan. 20, 1859, but was not responded to, and the moderator regretted much to hear from the lady who prevented it, that the Catholic referred to was present and the moderator promised her that it should be especially noticed tomorrow, Jan 21: Will the moderator of tomorrow, Friday, Jan. 21 please pay attention to it.<sup>5</sup>

The sensitivity was demonstrated in not praying for the Catholic individual, who was present, so as not to embarrass him. The serious attitude toward each request is visible in the promise that the request will be remembered the following day..

The fourth observation is that only a remnant of the prayer requests survived. Talbot Chambers recollects that "much more than a quarter of a million of requests for remembrance have been received and read and filed at the Fulton Street rooms."<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 3.FSPM-1858.0268

<sup>6</sup> Talbot W. Chambers, "*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*" (A Discourse presented at the thirtieth anniversary of the Daily Noon Prayer Meetings at the Collegiate Church, New York, New York, 23 September 1887.) available from <http://www.rca.org/aboutus/archives/chambersfulton.pdf>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2005. 21.

The requests preserved by the Collegiate Church Corporation number approximately 2000 requests.<sup>7</sup> With only a small fraction of the written requests surviving, it is important to study and glean the benefit of them.

Fifth, the requests represent a diverse grouping of needs varying from request to request. Talbot Chambers describes the variety of prayer requests, stating:

The records of the meetings contain copious memorials of these applications, many of them very affecting in their simplicity and urgency. There is scarcely any form of human sorrow, anxiety, or perplexity that is not here represented. Often there are sad heart-histories revealed—sorrows arising from impaired bodily health, financial embarrassments, spiritual darkness, family troubles, worldly oppressions, Satan’s fiery darts, subtle temptations, and the like.<sup>8</sup>

The prayer requests cover all forms of challenges and hardships involved in the human condition.

### **Prayer Request Descriptions**

The prayer requests can be grouped into three categories. The first category is requests centering on conversion, temptation, and personal growth. The second category focuses on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The third category is requests that have some historical significance. Grouping the prayer requests by topics made it easy to see and understand the variants, thus choosing the request that best represents the category was easy.

#### **Category 1: Conversion, Temptation, and Personal Growth**

The majority of the prayer requests were for the conversion of someone who did not believe the Christian message. Here is an example, where a minister is

---

<sup>7</sup> This number is arrived at by multiplying the number of digital slides (326) by the average number of requests (6) per slide.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 18.

requesting prayer for his only son:

The prayers of this meeting are earnestly requested in behalf of an only son of a minister of the Gospel who notwithstanding the religious influences by which he has been surrounded still continues impenitent. The prayers of this meeting are solicited for his conversion and that if it be the will of God he may be made a minister.<sup>9</sup>

This request is an example of the conversion request. Most requests will briefly explain who is making the request, the relationship with the subject of the request, and the circumstances surrounding the request. Many combinations of relationship are represented among the request, including a son or daughter for parents or grandparents, for aunts and uncles, for brothers and sisters, for children, for friends, neighbors, and anyone whose name may be spoken in their local congregation.

The most common request in the conversion genre was from a widowed mother for her impenitent, only son. Here is an example of this type of request. “A mother who is a widow desires your fervent prayers for the immediate conversion of an only son.”<sup>10</sup> The previous example illustrates the one-line prayer request received by the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting. Here is another example, demonstrating a moderate use of words. “A Christian mother earnestly requests the prayer of God’s people for an intemperate son fast going on the downward coarse [sic] in sin and blasphemy – that God would now arrest him and lead him to the cross of Christ.”<sup>11</sup> Here is a third example demonstrating an extensive prayer request.

For pitys [sic] sake lend me your prayers for a first born son. He curses me his widowed mother and with a demon scowl has turned his back on

---

<sup>9</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0031 The quote is almost entirely without commas to set-off phrase and help with understanding. The grammatical mark to end a sentence can be a period or can also be a dash. The prayer requests used throughout this project have various levels of punctuation and complete sentences.

<sup>10</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0004

<sup>11</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0007

me for life. And why? Because I have been his best and most faithful friend. I have striven to rescue him from the blighting influence of a wicked female who has taught him to scorn his poor desolate mother and in her charmed circle she drags him down to Hell. His sainted father is in heaven and died exhorting me to train his three boys to meet him there. Oh how I have struggled on thro' adverse circumstances to make them all they should be. Oh pray for my three sons who are all backsliders. Oh pray for these dear youth who are all away from me. Oh pray for Willie who despises the mother who has sacrificed all for her sons.<sup>12</sup>

All three prayer requests are included to illustrate the three different lengths of the requests. These three requests are not from the same widowed mother or for the same impenitent son; however, each one has the same basic request of a widowed mother requesting prayer for her only son. All three lengths of prayer requests are representative of the lengths of all the prayer requests.

There are several variants of the conversion prayer request. Here is a request for the conversion of son from his parent, a minister. "A minister of the Gospel earnestly requests the prayers of this meeting for the conversion of an only son, and not only for his conversion, but that he may be made a minister of the Gospel, and a messenger of salvation to the perishing heathen. This son joins in the request."<sup>13</sup> This prayer request illustrates the possibility that divine conviction may be troubling the son's heart, because the son joins with his parent in making this request. The request does present the question of whether the call to ministry was a parental wish or a leading of the Holy Spirit.

A rare variant of the conversion genre is someone writing to the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting on their own behalf. Here is an example of such a request. "The prayers of this meeting respectfully requested for George Banham who has lived all

---

<sup>12</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0117

<sup>13</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0032

his life in wickedness and only a few days ago contemplated suicide and the great crime of murder in hope of ending his misery.”<sup>14</sup> This request was signed “George Banham.” Signing a prayer request is usual for prayer requests during this revival. The majority of requests were signed “a sister” or “a brother.”

Another variant of the conversion request is protection from temptation. “Pray for my youngest boy. He has just entered college and is surrounded by all the temptation of a college life. I try to plead the promise of the Abrahamic covenant but all the allurements of the wicked world use up before me and like Peter my faith is weak.”<sup>15</sup> This request does not address whether the son is a Christian, but only that he needs spiritual protection from the allurements of all.

The temptation theme is augmented with a request for conversion in the next request. “Prayers are requested for a young friend today who will be greatly exposed to temptation, that he may be shielded there from or strengthened to resist them and that he may be led to repentance and faith in Christ.”<sup>16</sup> This request illustrates the requester’s desire for the temptations of the world not to hinder this “young friend” as he comes to the moment of conversion.

The next request focuses on a woman’s sense of need. “Prayers requested for an aged widow, now in her 85<sup>th</sup> year, who has lived a moral life but it is feared that she has not the something needful.”<sup>17</sup> This request illustrates the inner need for more than just living a moral life. What her soul longs for is a salvation experience with Jesus Christ. This request is one representative of many requests.

---

<sup>14</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0024

<sup>15</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 2. FSPM-1858.0225

<sup>16</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0033

<sup>17</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0007

A variant which includes a testimony of answered prayer follows:

The brother in law for whom prayers have been offered in this room desires to add his testimony to the efficacy of prayer; he humbly trusts thro' the merits of a dying Savior that he has been hopefully converted and earnestly requests the continued prayers of this meeting, that his faith may be strengthened in the Lord.<sup>18</sup>

This prayer request couples a testimony of answered prayer for conversion and another request for continued growth in faith.

Another variant emphasizes that uncompromising passion that possessed the people during the revival. Here is an example of this request:

I am struggling, hewing away at the pillars of Satan's kingdom and spoke yesterday in your meeting about having been upon the stage. Will you please pray for me that I may meet with as much kindness from Christians as from men of the world formerly? Pray that I may be successful in pulling down the prow of Satan's palaces. I shall refuse stage offers if I go clothless and famishing with hunger to the grave. Will you not forget me after praying for me once? I have a great work to do. Sincerely yours, Geo. W. Calef.<sup>19</sup>

It maybe true that the natural dramatic nature of this performer is evident, however he wants to change his life. His prayer is that God will endear him in the hearts of Christians as he was endeared to "men of the world." Included in the life is also a passion for tearing down the palace of the enemy.

The final variant of the conversion genre is the request for professors of religion. The unique element of this request was the number of requests for professors included in the Archives of the Collegiate Church Corporation. Here is an example of this request:

An aged mother requests the prayer of the Fulton Street Prayer meeting in behalf of her husband and daughter in law who have long been professors of religion but do not exhibit a Christian spirit and that I may not hinder the

---

<sup>18</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0024

<sup>19</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0074



blessing. As I have been fed with crumbs that fall I have for sometime past felt constrained to cast in my lot for a share I am fully sensible that my help my help is in God alone therefore I pray you to plead with him.<sup>20</sup>

This request illustrates a trap that all professors of religion face and that is when they move away from the spiritual and dwell on the academic. It is enticing to embrace modernistic theories and ignore that which cannot be “proved” rationally. Of course, the prayer request didn’t go into detail as to what was meant by “not exhibiting a Christian spirit.” This concern is just as vague in following request:

The prayers of the meeting are earnestly requested for an individual long a professor of the religion of Christ and who long thought it was his great pleasure to labour in his vineyard; but is now walking in darkness, mourning his hardness of heart, anxiously desiring above all things else, the witness of the Spirit of his regeneration [sic], true repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he may have peace which the world cannot give and be enabled to glorify God.

This professor is walking in darkness and mourning his hard heart, however he does long for the things of Christ and desires to repent from things of the world.

### Category 2: The Outpouring of the Spirit

The second category focuses on the desired movement of the Holy Spirit. When the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting was blessed with the presence of the Holy Spirit, which brought revival, many other churches and communities wanted that same experience and the subsequent blessings of God. The prayer requests in this category illustrate this desire. Here is a good example: “I have seen your name connected with the Fulton Street Prayer meetings and I ask through you the earnest prayers of that meeting on behalf of a church – when there have been daily meetings held, but very few if any conversions.”<sup>21</sup> The petitioner’s perspective is if the prayers

---

<sup>20</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0021

<sup>21</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0005

of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting are being answered, then he should place his requests before the Prayer Meeting and have the meeting pray for a revival for his town. Here is another example summarized by a church staff member for use in the prayer meetings. “A letter received at this office asks that the brethren in the Fulton Street Union Prayer Meeting will pray for a genuine scriptural revival among all denominations in Texas. Also, that Mexico with her nine million papists may be evangelized.”<sup>22</sup>

Generally, requests of this genre include some details addressing the failure of their own prayer meetings in invoking a revival.

Dear Brethren, permit me to solicit a deep interest in the prayers of your society, for three successive days, for the outpouring of God’s Spirit in the town of Saint Marys (Georgia) where a daily union prayer meeting of fifteen weeks continuance has closed without the conversion of a single soul.<sup>23</sup>

In this case, a prayer meeting was held in the town of Saint Marys, Georgia where prayers were lifted to God for fifteen weeks without seeing any benefit. This request illustrates again the conviction that if the request could be prayed for at the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting, then the request would be answered.

Another aspect to these prayer requests for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the community aspect. In the previous request, they prayed for fifteen weeks without results. Here is another example of similar effort.

Members of several churches met in prayer as usual last night in the Presbyterian Church. We meet also on the Sabbath day at 3 ½ o’ clock [sic]. We want a revival of religion. We need to be baptized

---

<sup>22</sup>*Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0028. Religious tension in the Texas territory was due to the immigration of citizens of the United States to the territory. The Texas territory was Roman Catholic in heritage, while the immigrants brought their faith tradition, thus causing conflict.

<sup>23</sup>*Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0029

from above. Our young are, many of them, far away from God. Fellow Christians in Fulton Street will you not prayer for us, for our children, and for our impenitent young men. May God grant unto you much favor at the throne of grace.<sup>24</sup>

The members of several churches met at regularly scheduled times for prayer petitioning God for a revival. The community effort or corporate prayer does not always guarantee divine answers. The individual prayer requests are limited as to content. The requests do not address issues of divine timing or wrong motives, but rather only a desire to see the prayer requests answered.

### Category 3: Requests with Historical Significance

The third category of prayer requests captures the need of a historical moment. The time preceding and during the Fulton Street Prayer Revival was complex as was illustrated in chapter two of this project. With polarizing politics, an unstable economy, westward expansion, a wealth-hungry population, an indifferent clergy, and the growth of immigration, this provides the backdrop for many needs.

The following prayer requests illustrate the situation.

The first prayer request captures the church culture of the time.

The pastor of a rural church in Illinois requests the prayers of the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings, N. Y., in behalf of the church that peace and harmony may once more prevail among them, and that pure and undefiled religion may be received among them in the midst of so much worldly mindedness, and such a haste to be rich which prevails so greatly through out this western portion of Zion.<sup>25</sup>

This insightful pastor recognizes the general contentiousness, the worldly mindedness, and the desire for wealth in the hearts of his parishioners. As mentioned above and in chapter two, this prayer request expresses the need for revival in the

---

<sup>24</sup>*Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0012

<sup>25</sup>*Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0025

human heart. In securing the revival in his congregation, he contacts the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting seeking God's intervention.

The next request focuses on the need of the Native Americans in Kansas. "You pray for the Hindoo [sic], the Chinese, the African, the Islander: O pray for the poor Indian that wanders over our country. Listen to a cry coming from the plains of Kansas, and pray the Lord for us that 'under His shadow we will live among the heathen.'"<sup>26</sup> During this time in history, Native American relations varied geographically. In the Northeastern United States, Native Americans were being relegated to reservations or common lands, which the federal government hoped to stabilize Native American hostilities, causing a loss of individual tribal identity. The remainder of the United States was in various stages of relationship with Native Americans from initial contact with individual tribes to conflict and hostility over land issues.<sup>27</sup> In Kansas, the Native American relationship and expanding white population was hostile. The Native Americans were losing tribal lands and struggling to maintain their way of life.<sup>28</sup>

The next prayer request focuses on public school politics and the Christian faith.

Prayers are requested by a number of persons interested in our public schools, that the reading of the Bible in these sources of instruction for the poor may be continued, and that Christians may feel the importance of selecting such officers for our city government as will prevent its exclusion and will restore the reading of the Bible in the fourteen ward-schools in which it is now supplied.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0062

<sup>27</sup> Eleanor Burke Leacock and Nancy Oestreich Lurie. *North American Indians in Historical Perspective* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, Inc., 1971) x-xi.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0064

The petitioner is rallying support for Bible reading in the public schools and putting the prayer request before the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting, thus calling upon God to move individuals to respond to this concern. Only a small percentage of the poor of New York City professed the Christian faith. This is similar to Jeremiah Lanphier's challenge as inner-city missionary, where he was to evangelize on a one-to-one basis going from home to home. In a social gospel sense, this request might not only have evangelistic overtones, but as a proposed resolution for their poverty.

The next request focuses on the coming civil war:

The prayers are also requested in behalf of one, an officer in the Army who was ordered far from home fell under the powerful conviction to sin. He is away from all religious influence. Oh pray the blessed Spirit may go with him and that he may ere long give up all to Christ. Let your prayers be earnest. Oh let them be fervent dear brethren.<sup>30</sup>

This prayer request is for an army officer who is under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, but is called back into service without a conversion experience. This could represent many soldiers during the Civil War. Conversion experiences were plentiful in both armies. J. Edwin Orr emphasized that after the traditional dates of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, revival fervor began to grow in both armies.<sup>31</sup>

The Union Army benefited from chaplains and Christian delegates who ministered to the troops. Sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Association, D. L. Moody held daily prayer meetings for the Cumberland regiment in Nashville.<sup>32</sup> As many delegates ministered, like D. L. Moody, revival broke out among the Union

---

<sup>30</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0152

<sup>31</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century* (Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989) 217. It would seem reasonable that the Fulton Street Prayer Revival continued through the Civil War, especially in the northern states (p. 222) and in both armies. This would give support to Long's contention that the revival disappeared into the background, while public focus was on the war.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

troops and the Confederate prisoners of war.<sup>33</sup>

In the Confederate Army, revival started in the hospitals among the wounded and spread back to the army camps.<sup>34</sup> Orr points out that according to conversion and baptism records, the revival climaxed in 1863 and 1864.<sup>35</sup> A challenge created by the conversions was that the army could not build chapels fast enough to handle the religious enthusiasm.<sup>36</sup>

The next request expresses a concern for a husband in California.

I read of the great and wonderful work God is doing in your midst in converting sinners in answer to prayer. I have a husband in California for years past and I have but little to hope and much to fear concerning him since his departure from us. It has been our family prayer that his name might be written in the Book of life. Signed "A Wife."<sup>37</sup>

The request does not state why the husband is in California. However, this request does fit the pattern of the men who went to California looking for gold. Men went to California hoping for a better life than they could create in the East.<sup>38</sup> However, life in California was not wholesome. The men that came to California came from all over the world and with them came their values.<sup>39</sup> It was not long before prostitution, gambling halls, and bull-fighting were available in mining towns.<sup>40</sup> The wife's petition for her husband is well founded if this was his life setting.

The significance of the prayer requests can be found in the changed lives and attitudes of the petitioners. Similarly to the insightful pastor who described the

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 230.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 227.

<sup>37</sup> *Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1. FSPM-1858.0154

<sup>38</sup> Susan Lee Johnson. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2000) 58.

<sup>39</sup> Josiah Royce. *California* (Santa Barbara, CA.: Peregrine Publishers, Inc., 1970) 178.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 179.

spiritual environment in the first prayer request of category three, the culture of the United States before the revival was generally contentious, worldly minded, and focused on amassing material possessions. During the revival, the hearts of the petitioners turned to God for the spiritual needs of themselves, their loved ones and friends, and for the church and society. In almost every prayer request there is a sense of desperation and urgency that their request be answered. If their prayers were not being answered in their own setting, then they needed to make their requests known to the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting where prayers were being answered.

The forgotten voices of the petitioners of the prayer requests begin to give insight into the spiritual and human condition during the revival. The next chapter will explore the eyewitness commentary on the prayer meetings. The forgotten voices will fathom the depths of the relationship that God seeks to have with humanity. In addition, the spiritual characteristics of the prayer meetings will be examined and a model created for comparison study.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FULTON STREET PRAYER MEETING:  
A MODEL FOR TODAY

Prayer is an integral part of the Christian life. The Apostle Paul declares that Christians should “pray without ceasing.”<sup>1</sup> The Apostle James writes:

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, <sup>3</sup>they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.<sup>2</sup>

James emphasizes more specifically times to pray and how vital a life of prayer is to the Christian, where Paul makes an all-encompassing statement about prayer, that there is no time when a Christian should not be praying.

If one were to walk down the aisles of a Christian library, one would see shelves filled with books on prayer from all eras of church history. Similar to the works of E. M. Bounds,<sup>3</sup> the last four decades have seen works covering a variety of nuances of prayer. Several works resemble Wesley L. Duewel’s book, *Mighty Prevailing Prayer*<sup>4</sup> that isolate and teach unique themes and characteristics, thus assisting the individual to draw closer to God through his understanding and practice of prayer.

There is a resurgence of interest in learning to communicate with God. It is not enough to only share our requests with God. A Christian needs to learn to hear God’s voice. The Apostle John writes:

---

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV).

<sup>2</sup> James 5:12-16 (NIV)

<sup>3</sup> E. M. Bounds. *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1990) np.

<sup>4</sup> Wesley L. Duewel. *Mighty Prevailing Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Francis Asbury Press, 1990) np.



I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.<sup>5</sup>

This is the foundational passage for most of the works written on this topic. For Larry Lea,<sup>6</sup> the key to hearing God's voice is recognizing that God wants to speak, removing the hindrances to listening, using the word of God as an aid, and then using the Lord's Prayer as a guide to the spiritual realms. In contrast, Cindy Jacobs<sup>7</sup> recognizes listening in prayer as part of the prophetic gift and her book develops this theme of how interwoven listening is to the prophetic ministry.

Spiritual warfare and works detailing demon confrontations have increased exponentially. C. Peter Wagner is the most prolific contributor to this body of knowledge. His works include his four volumes, *The Prayer Warfare Series*,<sup>8</sup> and *Engaging the Enemy: How to Fight and Defeat Territorial Spirits*,<sup>9</sup> which he edited. Topics include congregational prayer, prayer for your pastor, spiritual mapping, seeking God's power and protection in warfare prayer, and testimonies of success in spiritual warfare.

Different models of prayer have emerged with the purpose of helping Christians produce an effective personal prayer life. One model of prayer was created by Dick Eastman for his "Change the World School of Prayer" ministry. His book, *The Hour that*

---

<sup>5</sup> John 10:1-4 (NIV).

<sup>6</sup> Larry Lea. *The Hearing Ear: Learning to Listen to God* (Altamonte Springs, FL.: Creation House, 1988) np.

<sup>7</sup> Cindy Jacobs, *The Voice of God: How God Speaks Personally and Corporately to His Children Today* (Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1995) np.

<sup>8</sup> C. Peter Wagner. *Warfare Prayer* (Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1992) np., C. Peter Wagner. *Prayer Shield* (Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1992) np., C. Peter Wagner, *Churches That Pray* (Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1993) np., and C. Peter Wagner. *Breaking Strongholds in Your City* (Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1993) np.

<sup>9</sup> C. Peter Wagner, ed. *Engaging The Enemy* (Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1991) np.

*Changes the World*,<sup>10</sup> describes how dividing an hour up into five-minute segments and focusing each time period in a different type of prayer, an individual can effectively pray all essential parts of prayer in an hour. The five-minute segments begin with praise, adoring the Lord.<sup>11</sup> Second, the focus turns toward waiting quietly before the Lord.<sup>12</sup> Third, this time period is dedicated to the repentance of sin.<sup>13</sup> Fourth, this segment is filled with scripture praying, which grows an individual's faith by reminding the individual of God's promises.<sup>14</sup> Fifth, one must be watchful in prayer.<sup>15</sup> Sixth, intercession is the focus. Intercession is presenting the concerns of others to the Lord in prayer.<sup>16</sup> Seventh, this segment is petitioning. Petitioning is making personal needs known to God.<sup>17</sup> Eighth, thanksgiving is the next activity. Thanksgiving is expressing our gratitude and appreciation to God for all that He has done.<sup>18</sup> The ninth segment is dedicated to singing. This segment is a musical time of worship in the hour.<sup>19</sup> Tenth, meditation is the focus. This is a time of spiritual assessment.<sup>20</sup> Eleventh, this segment is listening, where one mentally absorbs divine instructions.<sup>21</sup> Twelfth, the hour is concluded with praise, expressing the glory of God, His goodness, and our passion for Him.<sup>22</sup> This prayer model was presented in a one-day seminar, where participants were given an opportunity to practice what they learned.

---

<sup>10</sup> Dick Eastman. *The Hour that Changes the World* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1978) np.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 21-28.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 31-39.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 41-50.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 53-61.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 63-73.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 75-85.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 87-93.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 95-101.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 103-113.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 115-124.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 127-134.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 137-143.

Larry Lea offers a more biblical model based on “The Lord’s Prayer.”<sup>23</sup> Lea uses the disciples request, “Lord, teach us to pray”<sup>24</sup> as a contemporary question, thus Jesus’ answer of the “The Lord’s Prayer” is the contemporary answer and a teaching model. Lea recognizes that every phrase of The Lord’s Prayer is only an example and that they can be replaced by other phrases that are similar to the original. For example, “Our father” expresses the divine characteristic of the fatherhood of God. Any characteristic of God would fit this category. Lea writes, “Now in the Old Testament, there are eight names compounded with the name *Jehovah*: *Jehovah—tsidkenu*, *Jehovah—m’kaddesh*, *Jehovah—shammah*, *Jehovah—shalom*, *Jehovah—rophe*, *Jehovah—jireh*, *Jehovah—nissi*, and *Jehovah—rohi*. Each of these names is a revelation of the character and nature of God.”<sup>25</sup> If an individual wanted to pray a characteristic that was more appropriate in the context of his life, he might pray, “*Jehovah—shammah*, thank you for hearing me. You are the God who hears.” This is true of all the components.

This model is not a model of total free association, although the abuse of this model might appear that way. Lea uses the phrase, “Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us” as a deliberate opportunity to emphasize the kingdom principle, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”<sup>26</sup> When individuals reach this part in the prayer model, they confess their sins before God. Following confession, they search their hearts and forgive those who have sinned against them. In forgiving others, Lea is

---

<sup>23</sup> Larry Lea. *Could you not Tarry one Hour?* (Lake Mary, FL.: Creation House, 1987) np.

<sup>24</sup> Luke 11:1 (NIV)

<sup>25</sup> Lea, *Could you not Tarry one Hour?*, 59.

<sup>26</sup> Matthew 7:12 (NIV).

teaching the individual to get along with others.<sup>27</sup>

The remainder of this chapter will develop a prayer model based on the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. The characteristics of the revival will determine the content of the prayer model. As it is developed, this writer will explore how the Fulton Street Prayer Model differs from the prayer models presented earlier in this chapter.

### **The Prayer Model**<sup>28</sup>

As contemporary society becomes larger and more technical, there is a push to develop systems or models for many aspects of daily living. This new passion of contemporary society is being applied to weight loss, investing and wealth development, credit rehabilitation, home shopping and remodeling, computer usage, and finding peace within oneself. The challenge with this process is that simple logistics can be confused with the “produced” characteristics. The Fulton Street Prayer Meeting/Revival can be used to compare both aspects of the prayer model.

### **The Logistics**

Creating a logistical model begins with the meeting starting at noon and lasting one hour.<sup>29</sup> The meetings would be held in a meeting room of a church, similar to meeting in the Consistory room of the North Dutch Church.<sup>30</sup> Handbills were created and distributed advertising the prayer meetings.<sup>31</sup> Individuals coming to the meetings were free to come and go as they pleased.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Lea, *Could you not Tarry one Hour?*, 126.

<sup>28</sup> Several quotations will be used to illustrate the points in the prayer model. In this section, the forgotten voices will speak.

<sup>29</sup> Samuel I. Prime, *The Power of Prayer: The New York Revival of 1858* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998) 7-8.

<sup>30</sup> Talbot Chambers, *The New York City Noon Prayer Meeting* (Colorado Springs, CO.: Wagner Publications, 2002) 28.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

Chambers comments on the logistics of rules to promote the desired spiritual character of the meetings. “The character of the meetings has been rigidly adhered to; the object of those who had the direction of things being, on the one hand to maintain the freedom and latitude of the exercises; and on the other, to guard against disorder, and prevent the single and spiritual character of the assembly from being perverted or lost from sight..”<sup>33</sup>

Chambers continues by listing the rules. The following comes from a handbill:

**PLEASE OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING RULES.**

**BE PROMPT.**

**COMMENCING PRECISELY AT TWELVE O’CLOCK.**

The Leader is not expected to exceed ten minutes in opening the meeting.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Open the meeting by reading and singing from three to five verses of a hymn.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prayer.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Read a portion of the Scripture.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Say the meeting is now open for prayers and exhortations, observing particularly the rules overhead, inviting the brethren from abroad to take part in the service.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Read but one or two requests at a time—REQUIRING a prayer to follow—such prayer to have reference to the same.
- 6<sup>th</sup> In case of any suggestion or proposition by any person, say this is simply a Prayer meeting, and that they are out of order, and call on some other brother to pray.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Give out the closing hymn five minutes before one o’clock. Request the Benediction from a Clergyman, if one be present.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>34</sup> Chambers, 38.

The rules are an indispensable part of the meetings. An observer commented in *The Oberlin Evangelist* that “without rules, such meetings could scarcely live two days. It would be the most natural thing in the world for them to be killed by the tedious length of unregulated prayers and exhortation.”<sup>35</sup> In the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, an attendee described the meetings as follows. The adherence to the rules is clearly illustrated:

There was no noise, no confusion. A layman conducts the meeting. Any suitable person may pray, or speak to the audience, for five minutes only [afterwards reduced to three.] If he do not bring his prayer or remarks to a close in that time, a bell is touched and he gives way. One or two verses of the most spiritual hymns go up like the “sound of mighty waters;” requests for prayer for individuals are then read; one layman or minister succeeds another, in perfect order and quiet, and after a space which seems a few minutes, so strange, so absorbing, so interesting is the scene, the leader announces that it is one o’clock, and punctual to the moment, a minister announces the benediction, and the immense audience, slowly, quietly, and in perfect order, pass from the Hall; some ministers remaining to converse in a small room off the platform, with any who may desire spiritual instruction.<sup>36</sup>

Using logistics as a guideline for a meeting is only the starting point. The logistics are not the characteristics of a meeting. To illustrate, logistics are like finding the head of a trail and planning to hike the trail to its end. The characteristics describe whether the trail is easy or hard to hike, uphill or downhill, smooth or rocky, long or short, scenic or with no view, or well-worn or less traveled. Jeremiah Lanphier started with a logistical idea, but had a deeper spiritual purpose in mind.<sup>37</sup>

### The Characteristics

Taking the model from the logistics to the heart of God, one must consider what happened in the meetings. What were the characteristics of the meetings? In chapter

---

<sup>35</sup> “The Rules and the Spirit of the Great Prayer Movement.” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (24 March 1858) 31.

<sup>36</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 501-502.

<sup>37</sup> Prime, 35.

three, a list of eight characteristics was provided by James Alexander. These eight characteristics will be discussed here to ascertain the characteristic guidelines for the prayer model.

The theme of this prayer model must be relationship with God. In the context of prayer, Talbot Chambers states:

A religious life is a life of communion with God. He speaks to us in His Word and by His providence and through His Spirit, and we lift our hearts to him in conscious dependence and petition, and also in thankfulness and adoration and homage. This fellowship is, and the nature of the case must be, continuous. It is the beating pulse of the believer's life.<sup>38</sup>

This reality of living in relationship with God must be the backbone of the model.

The characteristics of the revival illustrate the intricacies of the relationship with God.

**Characteristic One and Two:** The Revival was God Given and directed toward Christians

In the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, revival was God given. Walter Kaiser Jr. writes that a “revival remains the prerogative and special work of God.”<sup>39</sup> God chooses to reveal Himself to humanity in a particular place attempting to draw people to Himself in repentance and in relationship. We read from the Presbyterian Quarterly Review,

That God thus comes to men, direct, unveiled, this is the kingdom of grace. That he reveals himself to his chosen ones, so that the monarchs of mankind are ignorant compared with the humblest Christian, in the plainest teachings of Scripture. That the God of life takes men unto such close union with himself, that nothing but the union between the Persons in the Godhead is the fit emblem of its intimacy, is expressly revealed in the Prayer of the Eternal

---

<sup>38</sup> Talbot W. Chambers. “*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*” (A Discourse presented at the thirtieth anniversary of the Daily Noon Prayer Meetings at the Collegiate Church, New York, New York, 23 September 1887.) available from <http://www.rca.org/aboutus/archives/chambersfulton.pdf>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2005. page 4.

<sup>39</sup> Walter C. Kaiser Jr. *Revive Us Again: Biblical Principles for Revival Today* (Nashville, TN.: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2001) 3.

Son to the Eternal Father.<sup>40</sup>

The words of Jesus Christ in Luke 10:21-22 are echoed in the above citation.

Being full of joy through the Holy Spirit, Jesus said:

I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”<sup>41</sup>

One might correctly argue, “God is eternal. Of His perfect and infinite love we can conceive of no fitful outburst and of arbitrary cessation. It is everywhere and at all time perfectly the same.”<sup>42</sup> However, there is a difference between God’s universal love blanketing humanity and His special revelation of Himself in revival. Isaiah illustrates this passage from his prophecy:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.” Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”<sup>43</sup>

As Isaiah experiences, when God reveals Himself in revival, there is an immediate awareness of human sin. Sin cannot exist long in the presence of the Holiness of God.

Isaiah cried out in repentance for himself and the people of God. With a simple touch of

---

<sup>40</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 493.

<sup>41</sup> Luke 10:21-22. (NIV)

<sup>42</sup> “The Religious Awakening of 1858.” *The New Englander* 16 (August 1858) 654.

<sup>43</sup> Isaiah 6:1-7. (NIV)



his lips with coal from the altar, his sins were atoned for.

The second characteristic is God brought revival to His people. Isaiah the prophet did not cry out only for his sins, but for sins of God's people. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we read a description of the revival relationship: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."<sup>44</sup> The verse starts with the phrase "if my people." These are the people of God, and this is a conditional passage. If God's people will recognize their relationship with God by humbling themselves and seeking God in prayer, then God will forgive and restore.

Although 2 Chronicles 7:14 is a conditional passage of Scripture, there is no guarantee that God will bring revival. God may choose to rest His blessing upon the suppliant. God may already be in judgment upon a place.<sup>45</sup>

Recommendations for these characteristics include not attempting to force God to do anything. He fulfills His will in His timing according to His prerogative. God's people need to seek to be clean before God, thus they need to continually be searching their hearts introspectively to repent of sin as God reveals it. They need to recognize and enjoy their relationship with God, growing that relationship into a deep communion.

### **Characteristic Three: The Holy Spirit was Evident**

Those attending the prayer meetings recognized the movement of the Holy Spirit. The most profound recognition of the moving of the Spirit was His transforming power working in peoples hearts according to the will of God. A "condition is submission to the will of God; a temper of the heart, formed in us by the Holy Spirit, yet arising out of a

---

<sup>44</sup> 2 Chronicles 7:14. (NIV)

<sup>45</sup> Consider Abraham and Lot and God's judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. .

sense of our ignorance of what is best for us, of our inability to secure our highest good.”<sup>46</sup> The visible change in individual lives was changing their affection from wealth and worldly goods to spiritual things and the will of God.

The most obvious recognition of the moving of the Spirit was drawing people to prayer. The anguish over one’s sins or the unsaved condition of others caused many to call out to God for mercy. In doing so many felt they had an intercessor before the throne of God. Samuel Graves stated that he had “a spirit which brings us to the throne of grace, and lays before it our petition in the language of the Savior.”<sup>47</sup>

Finally, the Spirit was acting outside the prayer meetings in many parts of the city. “So thoroughly is New York pervaded with the spirit of God, that the counting-rooms, in many places, are turned into places of prayer, and it is not unusual for the customer, while he is purchasing goods in one part of the store, to hear the voice of prayer and praise in another part.”<sup>48</sup> From this, many merchants included God’s business in their daily business.

In the midst of a passage discussing sinful behavior, Paul writes, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”<sup>49</sup> When revivals come, leaders who act contrary to the Spirit will grieve the Holy Spirit.

During the revival at Howard Payne University, individuals felt spiritually compelled to come to the microphone and confess their sins before those in the auditorium.<sup>50</sup> As the revival spread to Southwestern Seminary, the sins confessed became

---

<sup>46</sup> Samuel Graves. “The Efficacy of Prayer.” *The Christian Review* 23 (October 1858) 621.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 625.

<sup>48</sup> “Counting Room Prayer Meeting.” *Guide to Holiness* Vol. 33. (April 1858) 125.

<sup>49</sup> Ephesians 4:30. (NIV)

<sup>50</sup> John Avant, Malcolm McDow, & Alvin Reid, *Revival! The Story of the Current Awakening in Brownwood, Ft. Worth, Wheaton and Beyond* (Nashville:Broadman and Holman, 1996) 23.

more serious. “They confessed all forms of sins—adultery, homosexuality, lust, pornography, greed, racism.”<sup>51</sup> The administrators of the seminary assisted the students by helping others confess serious sins and the revival continued for several days.

In 1979, a similar event happened at Oral Roberts University through the ministry of Keith Green.<sup>52</sup> The revival started much the same way with students confessing sins. Eventually, the confession of sins had increased to one prominent student leader standing up and confessing his participation in homosexuality on campus. The presence of the Holy Spirit was strong, like heavy rain showers. One of the ORU administrators came on stage beside of the confessing student, telling him that God has forgiven him of his sin, that ORU would not bring disciplinary action against him, and that the school believed that sins like his should be confessed in private. Melody Green stated, “Something had obviously changed—but it wasn’t clear what. There was a tangible sense of loss of conviction and nobody else got up to share. The Holy Spirit, it seemed, had been quenched in some way, and there was nothing you could do to whip it up or bring it back. It was over.”<sup>53</sup>

Comparing the two narratives, it is important to obey the leading of the Holy Spirit. During the Fulton Street Prayer Revival, it was important to respond in prayer. In the contemporary narratives, it is important for the public confession of sins and the humbling of the saints. In both situations, this obedience was what unlocked the door for others to experience revival.

The recommendation from this characteristic is to seek communion with God. In

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>52</sup> Melody Green and David Hazard. *No Compromise: The Life Story of Keith Green* (Chatsworth, CA.: A Sparrow Press Book, 1989) 168-196. Keith Green was influenced by the work of Charles Finney. Keith’s desire was to see revival come.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 194.

addition, obey the leading of the Holy Spirit. This could mean praying with the penitent. Also, it could mean getting out of the way and letting the Holy Spirit work.

**Characteristic Four:** The Focus was Prayer

Samuel Prime portrays Jeremiah Lanphier as a man who took his responsibilities as city missionary of New York City seriously. Seeing little success in his calling, he found solace in spending time with God in prayer.<sup>54</sup> From his spiritual peace in prayer he felt that the businessmen of the city could use the benefits of prayer in their lives. Lanphier recounts, “Going my rounds in the performance of my duties one day, as I was walking along the streets, the idea was suggested to my mind that an hour of prayer, from twelve to one o’clock, would be beneficial to business men, who usually in great numbers take that hour for rest and refreshment.”<sup>55</sup>

God had plans to use the transforming power of prayer to revive a declining church. *The Guide to Holiness* stated, “In the furnace in which it has pleased the Lord to cast her, the Church has betaken herself to prayer, and the result is seen in the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>56</sup> Jeremiah Lanphier, mentioned above, and the prayer meetings were God’s tools. Samuel Graves stated, “But in the recent revival, Prayer—the ‘Union Prayer Meeting,’ stands forth as the most prominent human agency; indeed the revival was born of prayer; and a reliance upon simple instrumentality, connected with other appropriate means, is coming to be felt by our churches, which we hail as an earnest of yet the most glorious things.”<sup>57</sup>

God called individuals to prayer to restore communion with them, transform their

---

<sup>54</sup> Prime, *The Power of Prayer*, 6.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 7-8. This was taken from Lanphier’s diary, 1 July 1857 entry.

<sup>56</sup> “Revivals.” *Guide to Holiness* Vol. 33. (April 1858) 63.

<sup>57</sup> Samuel Graves. “The Efficacy of Prayer.” *The Christian Review*. 23 (October 1858) 620.

lives, and invite them to participate in the building of His kingdom. “Prayer then is not merely an indispensable condition of the soul’s communion with God in which is the life of practical religion, but it is also a working force in the upbuilding of God’s kingdom in the world.”<sup>58</sup> This is God’s desire in a larger sense.

One might ask, “What does this mean for the individual?” All human beings are made in God’s image with a soul.<sup>59</sup> The human soul has a spiritual desire to be in relationship with God. If a human being has been in relationship with God, but has forsaken that relationship, in a moment of despair, he will call upon the name of the Lord.<sup>60</sup> “Prayer then is the child of desire, the offspring of a heart that has been, or seeks to be, brought into unison with the divine will and purpose; so that its requests are in harmony with the mind of God.”<sup>61</sup>

In a practical sense, “Private Christians found their faith and love so stimulated by joint communion at the throne of grace that they were the more ready and more fitted to engage in personal effort for the salvation of men, and such effort in turn reacted and made them more eager to seek the aid that they needed from on high.”<sup>62</sup> “‘They called upon the Lord, and he answered them.’ [Psalm 99] These experiences were greatly multiplied in the early years of the noon meeting. Men felt that they could trace a close connection between their crying out to God and their receiving what they desired.”<sup>63</sup>

The recommendation from this characteristic is to keep prayer prominent. Let prayer come through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Approach God in an attitude of

---

<sup>58</sup> Talbot Chambers. “*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*” 14.

<sup>59</sup> Genesis 1:26. (NIV)

<sup>60</sup> Genesis 4:26b. (NIV)

<sup>61</sup> Samuel Graves. “The Efficacy of Prayer.” *The Christian Review*. 23 (October 1858) 624.

<sup>62</sup> Talbot Chambers. “*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*” 12.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

adoration and praise. Pray from the heart.

**Characteristic Five:** Waiting before God

In Psalm 37:7 we read, “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.”<sup>64</sup> This is the beginning of communion with God. Samuel Graves states, “[In] this waiting expectation, there is the spirit of submission diffused over the soul of the suppliant; nay, more; in the highest and truest exercise of prayer, the solitudes of the suppliant are loosened from self, and absorbed in the honor and glory of God.”<sup>65</sup> It is quietness before the Lord, calming the thoughts of daily life, and seeking God. Once communion between God and the suppliant is enjoyed, then one begins to sense the heart of God and hear His voice.

During the revival, Graves describes the heart activity of the suppliant, stating:

There is an earnest desire and heart-felt desire underlying the petitions; in fact true prayer is born of desire, —a desire that borders on agony, which, while it wrings the soul, lifts the eye and the expectation to God as the source of help; not indeed apart from the use of appropriate means, which means can be used; but to God as prevailing over and giving efficacy to all means; and where no means can be employed, —as when Elijah prayed for rain, a simple and waiting reliance upon the Word of God.<sup>66</sup>

These anguished feelings are borne out of waiting on God and direct prayer and daily life.

The recommendation from this characteristic is not to be afraid of silence. God might be dealing with someone’s sin or placing a prayer burden on the heart of the individual. In silence, the human heart is stilled. In silence, seeking God takes place. In silence, God speaks.

**Characteristic Six:** Salvation through the Righteousness of Jesus Christ

The essence of the gospel is that salvation occurs through the righteousness of

---

<sup>64</sup> Psalm 37:7. (NIV).

<sup>65</sup> Samuel Graves. “The Efficacy of Prayer.” *The Christian Review* 23 (October 1858) 624.

<sup>66</sup> Samuel Graves. “The Efficacy of Prayer.” *The Christian Review* 23 (October 1858) 623.

Jesus Christ.<sup>67</sup> Jesus lived a sinless life. He was crucified for our sins. He was resurrected from the grave. All humanity has victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ<sup>68</sup> should each person, individually, accept Christ's sacrifice and make Him Lord of one's life.<sup>69</sup>

*Presbyterian Quarterly Review* summarized the Gospel stating, "The essence and life of Christianity itself [is] just Christ and Him crucified."<sup>70</sup>

The *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* commented on the many worldly things that made men excited previously to the revival. During the revival men became excited about "The blood of Christ, the nails, the spear, the crown of thorns, the agony, the paleness, the bloody sweat, the unutterable love, the merciful pity, the sadness and the glory of the death of the Lord Jesus are overwhelming to the people who gather to these great meetings."<sup>71</sup> Men's hearts were turned to spiritual things and sinfulness of their own hearts. Men were moved to tears as they considered the cost that Christ paid for the sins of humanity.

Talbot Chambers described the opportunities for individual counseling after the prayer meetings. He states, "They were invited to meet the missionary and other friends in an adjoining room, where no effort was spared to give such help as the case required."<sup>72</sup> Continuing further, he writes, "In such cases nothing was urged upon them but the simple requisites of the gospel—faith, repentance, and a life consecrated to the

---

<sup>67</sup> Naturally, the gospel can become as complex and filled with more characteristics, prophecy fulfillment, etc. as an individual might chose to include. For the purpose here, the simplification of gospel should be enough for demonstrating the characteristics of the prayer meetings. The testimonies of the prayer meetings illustrate a simple gospel message impacting each individual uniquely. Christ has the power to save no matter what the circumstance.

<sup>68</sup> 1 Cor. 15. (NIV)

<sup>69</sup> Romans 10:9. (NIV)

<sup>70</sup> "The Revival." *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 507.

<sup>71</sup> "The Revival." *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 505.

<sup>72</sup> Talbot Chambers. "*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*" page 11.

redeemer. If they through grace obtain a Scriptural hope of acceptance, they were urged to confess Christ in connection with some recognized body of his people—the choice being left entirely to themselves.”<sup>73</sup>

In chapter three of this project, James Alexander was noted as saying, “The statistics of conversion are sometimes unsafe; where there is so much room for mistake and exaggeration, it may be wisest to venture no figures.”<sup>74</sup> One might think that there were only a few salvation experiences based on Alexander’s words. According to *The Oberlin Evangelist*, “A statistical statement of the number of conversions since last October has appeared in some of the daily papers, giving the total, thus far, at about 200,000. The exact number can never be given; and how near the present approximates to the truth, it is impossible to say.”<sup>75</sup> *The New York Tribune* concurred. “It is of course impossible to give accurately, or even to estimate approximately the actual number of conversions which may be set down as the results of such a work.”<sup>76</sup>

These citations describe a seriousness in the hearts of men as they turned their eyes to the Lord and the Lord took them to Himself. The true interpretation of these statements, pertaining to the volume of men calling on the Lord for salvation, was too great to estimate. *The Oberlin Evangelist* made the statement of 200,000 salvation experiences on 9 July 1858, just short of nine months since the beginning of the Revival.

Recommendations from this characteristic include, first, share the gospel simply and let the power of the Spirit work in the lives of individuals. Second, be available for

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> James W. Alexander. *The Revival and its Lessons: a Collection of Fugitive Papers Having Reference to the Great Awakening, 1858* (New York: American Tract Society, 1858) vol. 1, p. 8.

<sup>75</sup> “The General Revival.” *The Oberlin Evangelist* (9 June 1858) 90.

<sup>76</sup> “Revivals in New York.” *New York Tribune* (1 March 1858) reprinted in *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (17 March 1858) 24.



counsel and prayer. Listen to the individual. Take your lead from what the Spirit is doing.

**Characteristic Seven:** Leaders were Lay Leaders

Leaders of the prayer meetings were lay leaders. “No revival has ever been more distinguished for the useful labors of laymen. Often they have had sole management of the prayer meetings, around which the chief interest of the revivals has usually been concentrated.”<sup>77</sup>

In Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul writes,

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.<sup>78</sup>

This passage of scripture describes the Fulton Street Prayer Revival preparation intimately. First, God created the fivefold ministry to prepare God’s people for works of service. Consider Lanphier’s preparation for a moment. He attended the Broadway Tabernacle established by Charles Finney. He was a member of the Brick Presbyterian Church, pastored by evangelist, James Alexander. The element in Lanphier’s life that prompted the prayer meetings was the success in his own prayer life.

Second, preparing the people of God for works of service is this current characteristic. *The Oberlin Evangelist* states, “Laymen more often conduct them. Their voice and manner are new, and nobody has occasion to feel that they are performing

---

<sup>77</sup> “Characteristic Features of the Great Awakening of 1858.” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (26 March 1858) 84.

<sup>78</sup> Ephesians 4:11-16 (NIV).

merely a professional service—for good pay. A large class in the community needed to have the gospel come to them in lay rather than clerical hands, since, by this means, those ancient prejudices against a paid clergy are evaded.”<sup>79</sup> The laymen were used because they were prepared.

Third, one of the goals of the fivefold leadership for the body is “so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God.” This will be examined in the next characteristic partition.

The recommendation from this characteristic is to let those called to lead the prayer meetings, lead the prayer meetings. Do not allow spiritual pride to get in the way of God’s plan for His people.

**Characteristic Eight:** There was Unity Among Believers

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the revival was the unity among believers. Jesus prayed for this to happen among His disciples and those who would follow after them. He prayed:

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.<sup>80</sup>

Recognizing this characteristic, the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* credited this to the revival. It stated:

The revival has unconsciously taught us the principle in its union prayer meetings. “Brethren,” it said, “give up no one of your peculiarities. We interfere not with the Church in any of its form, rites or institutions. We ask no one to give church service or an ecclesiastical principle. Be as

---

<sup>79</sup> “The Rules and the Spirit of the Great Prayer Movement.” *The Oberlin Evangelist* (24 March 1858) 31.

<sup>80</sup> John 17:20-23. (NIV)

firm Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, as you ever have been. Only come together here as Christians around the Cross, and bring nothing here that we do not all believe and love.” The force of this simple idea is amazing.<sup>81</sup>

Talbot Chambers, describes the unity of believers, stating, “They learned to shake hands cordially over denominational fences and to take a deep and sincere interest in each other’s welfare. The steadiness of this influence augmented its power.”<sup>82</sup> The prayer meetings showed concern for any request offered regardless of denominational background. What was important was joining together in prayer and praying for the salvation of as many as possible.

*The Oberlin Evangelist* postulated that the Christian unity in the revival can only be compared to pre-sectarian days of the Church.

The union of all evangelical Christians in this revival has been almost universal, and inexpressibly precious. Never, since Protestant sects arose, has there been so much union and so little sectarian jealousy and denominationalism. It would not be easy to estimate adequately the values of this union in promoting love among the brethren, in making prayer acceptable to God, in preparing Christian hearts for the indwelling of the Spirit, and in removing from Christianity an indefinite amount of scandal.<sup>83</sup>

The observations of the revival are profound, insightful, and challenging. The recommendations for this characteristic are profound when stated by the *Presbyterian*

*Quarterly Review*:

Do not attempt to reconcile creeds or usages; do not discuss questions about union; do not force brethren into any common workings, based on plans where there may be difference of opinion, but worship the Crucified together, and work together to have all men love him with you, letting alone churches, rites, ceremonies, usages, doctrines. Come around the Cross and stay there.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 507.

<sup>82</sup> Talbot Chambers. “*The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church.*” 15.

<sup>83</sup> “Characteristic Features of the Great Awakening of 1858.” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (26 March 1858) 84.

<sup>84</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 508.

Summarizing the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, keep Christ central in all activities and intentionally stay away from divisive issues.

### **Comparing Prayer Models**

The prayer models discussed in this chapter each were created to move the individual closer to God. Each model provides some guidelines to assist in this process. Larry Lea's model uses the Lord's Prayer as a guideline to direct the prayer experience. Dick Eastman's model uses a schedule of five-minute segments each with a particular prayer activity focus. The Fulton Street Prayer Meeting uses a moderator to guide the prayer activities through an opening, prayer, singing, exhortation, and a closing.

The differences between the models vary according to their characteristics. The first difference is that the Eastman and the Lea models are intended to be individual in nature where the Fulton Street model is corporate in nature. The individual models require knowledge and self-discipline compared with the corporate model where an individual can be taught, lead, and supported by others. Biblically speaking, the individual models rely on the promise that "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."<sup>85</sup> The corporate model can claim that same promise, but add the following: "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."<sup>86</sup>

The second difference is the tension between structure and time limits. The most confining model is the Eastman model. Legally speaking, each five minute segment has a required activity for that time period. The Lea model has complete freedom to continue

---

<sup>85</sup> James 5:16. (NIV)

<sup>86</sup> Matthew 18:19-20. (NIV)

as long as the petitioner chooses, however the model requires a progression through the phrases of the Lord's Prayer. The Fulton Street model lasts only during the noon hour; however, other than the opening and closing moments, the meeting lacks content limitations allowing the Holy Spirit freedom to move. This freedom is the most distinctive element, especially when God brings revival.

The element that makes all the prayer models effective is the activity of the Holy Spirit. God can work in the most rigid structure and the most difficult situations. The request that came from the town of Jasper in chapter four of this project illustrates this point.

### **Recommendations Listed**

The following are an accumulated list of the recommendations based on The Fulton Street Revival characteristics:

1. Do not attempt to force God to do anything. He fulfills His will in His timing according to His prerogative.
2. Each person begins with repentance.
3. Seek communion with God.
4. Obey the leading of the Holy Spirit.
5. Get out of the way and let the Holy Spirit work.
6. Keep prayer prominent and guided by the Holy Spirit, adoring and praising from the heart.
7. Do not be afraid of silence.
8. Share the gospel simply and let the power of the Spirit work.
9. Be available for counsel and prayer. Listen to the individual. Take your lead from what the Spirit is doing.
10. Let those called to lead the prayer meetings, lead the prayer meetings.

11. Keep Christ central in all things.

12. Intentionally stay away from exhortations that contain divisive theological issues.

The list of recommendations are general in nature, however, they point to a growing relationship with God. Lanphier experienced prayer as spiritual refuge. God must be part of the prayer meetings. Emphasizing God's importance, *The Oberlin Evangelist* stated, "If God be not there, in his own impressive spiritual manifestations to the heart, we shape our rules in vain. The rules may greatly aid the Spirit's work, and hence their great importance. No mistake could be so fatal as to suppose that they could supply the place of the divine Spirit."<sup>87</sup>

Returning to the illustration of the wilderness trail, the logistics are the trail. God determines the terrain through the work of the Holy Spirit. What will repentance be like? How deep can an individual experience communion? Will Christian love be experienced across denominational lines? Will individuals find salvation? The Fulton Street Prayer Meetings and Revival were for the late 1850s. For results of prayer meetings in today's society, characteristic one provides the answer. It all depends on God's will.

---

<sup>87</sup> "The Rules and the Spirit of the Great Prayer Movement." *The Oberlin Evangelist* (24 March 1858) 31.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

The information about the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings and Revival is much like a 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle. The body of information provided by Prime and Chambers encompasses figuratively 800 pieces. This body of information is used by most authors as source material when referring to this revival. The periodicals of the time period, referred to in this project as “forgotten voices,” would make up another 100 pieces, filling in gaps and bringing greater definition to what is already known. The final 100 pieces refer to what is still missing.

The essential question posed in this thesis-project is, “What new information would be contained in the Fulton Street Revival narrative if the periodical descriptions were included?” In general, the periodical descriptions provide more detail and depth to definitions, relationships, and situations. The following are examples of what the forgotten voices have added to the Prime-Chambers narrative.

Most scholars consulted agree on the cause of the “Panic of 1857” and can describe the impact on the lives of the citizens of New York City. However, only the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* describes the inability of one man to trust another man in business dealings following the panic. This trust issue after the Panic is likened to “a paralysis, which still holds the land under its deathlike power.”<sup>1</sup>

The religious environment of the 1840s and 1850s was a spiritual desert. The focus of men was personal wealth and the pursuit of pleasure. There was little interest

---

<sup>1</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 490.

in the spiritual condition of non-Christians. Charles Finney, as recorded in the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, emphasized that even the clergy of all denominations had little interest in the conversion of non-Christians.

In the Prime-Chambers narrative, Jeremiah Lanphier's position is described as an inner city missionary without definition of his responsibilities. The narrative does include some description of his daily activities, but they are not as clear as the entry into the minutes of the Missionary Committee of the North Dutch Church.<sup>2</sup> The Missionary Committee had specific responsibilities listed for the missionary and in return for specific remuneration. The prayer meeting idea was not specifically included in the job description. However, the missions committee included a statement that gave the missionary the right to employ whatever means he wanted to extend the Kingdom of God, which would include the prayer meetings.

The unpublished material held in the Archives of the Collegiate Church Corporation goes into detail as to who lead the meetings. Some entries included the order of worship and the number in attendance. Talbot Chambers included the fervency of prayer and the focus of the prayer requests.

The Archives of the Collegiate Church Corporation hold a large collection of prayer requests. Each prayer request expresses desperation and urgency for God to intervene. The most common request is prayer sought by a mother for the conversion of a non-Christian son. The Fulton Street Prayer Meeting and Revival is unique in having collected the written requests. The narratives of most revivals focus on the answers to prayer and the general condition of the hardened heart, where the prayer

---

<sup>2</sup> *Minutes of the Missionary Committee of the North Dutch Church*. Special Meeting 17 June 1857. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY.



requests provide an opportunity to look individually at the heart of the one requesting prayer.

The forgotten voices gave clarity to the meetings. Rev. Douglas C. Boldt questioned whether the meeting had a band wagon mentality. An observer, through the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, pointed out that the events of the prayer meetings passed calmly from one item to another. Just as the prayer meetings progressed, they ended similarly “slowly, quietly, and in perfect order.”<sup>3</sup> Emotionalism had nothing to do with the attendance or the enthusiasm during the meetings.

The periodicals demonstrated an astute understanding of what was happening spiritually. *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* states:

That God thus comes to men, direct, unveiled, this is the kingdom of grace. That he reveals himself to his chosen ones, so that the monarchs of mankind are ignorant compared with the humblest Christian, in the plainest teachings of Scripture. That the God of life takes men unto such close union with himself, that nothing but the union between the Persons in the Godhead is the fit emblem of its intimacy, is expressly revealed in the Prayer of the Eternal Son to the Eternal Father.<sup>4</sup>

In the same description, it demonstrates a good understanding of Scripture. As in chapter five of this project, notice the similarity of this narrative with Luke 10:21, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.” This new depth of understanding is reported in eyewitness accounts.

Inside this project, questions were asked to provide a direction and a foundation for the forgotten voices. One question addressed the concerns of the churchmen during the revival. These concerns were pastoral in nature. First, concern

---

<sup>3</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 501-502.

<sup>4</sup> “The Revival.” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review* (January 1859) 493.

was expressed as to the authenticity of the conversion experience. This is an ongoing debate today. The concern of the churchmen was that the conversion experience was nothing more than an emotional experience and that it would not bear fruit.

Second, the leadership of the prayer meetings was primarily laymen. The churchmen were concerned with the low profile of the professional clergy during the revival. Although there were laymen leading the prayer meeting, there is evidence that the professional clergy led prayer meetings as well. In chapter 2 of this project, the records from the North Dutch Church show that Talbot Chambers, the pastor of the church, led some the prayer meetings once a week. Of course, the issue was whether the lay leaders had the theological awareness to guide the prayer meetings in a proper theological direction and provide protection from theological irregularities.

The third concern was if the professional clergy did not fill the role of leader in the prayer meetings, who would nurture and disciple the new converts to Christianity? Several individuals were converted to Christianity during the prayer meetings. Who would care for their needs? How would they find a church to attend? Who will help them mature in the Lord?

James W. Alexander had a concern about the reporting of the numbers of conversion experiences during the revival. He felt that it was impossible to correctly track all who were saved. There were too many conversion experiences in too many locations around the nation to track. To provide a number would not be an accurate tribute to the work of God.

The second question addressed the issue of bias in the secular press. The Fulton Street Prayer Revival came along as the secular press was discovering the

profitable niche of religious news. Attempts to test the profitability of religious news before the 1850s were unsuccessful.

Religious news found its niche after journalists discovered the human interest story. During the 1830s, journalists in the United States and Great Britain discovered that special interest papers were profitable. These papers and magazines were called “penny papers.” “Penny papers” were filled stories tailored to the interest of the common person, including police stories and court stories told with a humorous flare. Many of the “penny papers” grew into specialty papers that focused on an area of interest like union news, quilting, and religious news. “Penny papers” specializing in religious news became popular.

When the Fulton Street Prayer Revival started, the New York Tribune and New York Herald were encouraged to cover the revival. Not knowing how to cover a religious revival, the papers collected stories told by participants and printed them without bias. When the newspapers started seeing profits, they became unwitting assistants to God in reporting the results of changed lives and new religious fervor in New York City.

Another way to provide a platform for the “forgotten voices” to speak is to take the truth they provide and synthesize the truth into a model for others to examine. Chapter five of this project explores the important balance between the logistics Jeremiah Lanphier put in place in the prayer meetings and what God intended to do through the prayer meetings. Lanphier’s logistics included the prayer meetings started at noon and provided a “come and go” atmosphere where individuals could attend for the whole hour or just a few minutes as their schedules required. In

addition, no one could speak for more than five minutes at a time and no controversial topic could be addressed during the meetings.

God's intention was to take the prayer meetings and draw men and women to Himself. Many people were converted to Christianity, returned to Christianity from a backslidden state, were drawn into a closeness with God, were transformed into useful vessels for God's service, and sent back to their daily lives. Being spiritually changed individuals and discovering the power of prayer, it was not unusual for prayer meetings to happen in places of business during work hours. Finally, God wanted to replicate these prayer meetings throughout the United States and in other parts of the world.

The missing 100 pieces of the puzzle could have a dynamic effect on the study of the Fulton Street Prayer Revival. One of the greatest possible finds would be Jeremiah Lanphier's diary. Samuel I. Prime refers to Lanphier's diary and quotes from it throughout *The Power of Prayer*. The quotes from the diary demonstrate Lanphier's strong faith and his sensitivity to God.

The challenge presented by the undiscovered documents is that the course of time is working against them and their usefulness. In a conversation between the author of this project and Ms. Hollenga, archivist of the Collegiate Church Corporation, Ms. Hollenga stated that the North Dutch Church experienced a fire which may have destroyed many documents related to the prayer meetings.<sup>5</sup> There is no certainty to what was destroyed in the fire.

A second challenge facing the undiscovered documents is the deterioration of

---

<sup>5</sup> This information was ascertained in a personal interview between Ms. Hollenga and the writer at the Collegiate Church Archives on April 18, 2006.

the information as older data storage methods come to the end of their lifecycle. During the interlibrary loan process, Oberlin College experienced a problem of retrieving periodicals needed for this project, because the microfilm was showing wear and damage from usage over time. Data previously stored for future reference needs to be updated digitally for longer reference life.

A third challenge facing the undiscovered documents is that they are inadvertently filed away with material either waiting to be cataloged or miscataloged with other important documents. If this is the case, then time becomes a bigger adversary.

With data currently available, future study on the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting and Revival should include a close examination of the collection of prayer requests. A detailed examination of the prayer requests could include categorizing them by request content, level of familiarity with the prayer meeting, and creating a theology of intercession.

In the records held at the Archive of the Collegiate Church Corporation, an in-depth examination of the description of the prayer meetings could be developed. In some of the records, numbers were included representing elements of the prayer meetings. A numerical analysis of those numbers could be helpful.

No matter what other pieces of the puzzle are discovered, they can only lead to greater understanding of this revival forgotten in shadows of the Civil War. Almost any journal or personal papers of someone intimately involved in the prayer meetings could provide a clearer view of God's interaction and the relationship that He had with His people as He saw the approach of the Civil War.

May God draw men and women in to that close communion that is only experienced between the Trinity as He did during The Fulton Street Prayer Revival.

May God send revival again.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Books**

- Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972.
- Alexander, Henry Carrington. *The Life of Joseph Addison Alexander, D. D.* Vol. 2. New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1870.
- Alexander, James W. *Discourses on Common Topics of Christian Faith and Practice*. New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1870.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Revival and its Lessons: a Collection of Fugitive Papers Having Reference to the Great Awakening, 1858*. New York: American Tract Society, 1858.
- [\*America's Great Revivals\*](#). Minneapolis, MN.: Bethany House Publishers, 1995.  
Articles reprinted from Christian Life Magazine.
- Armstrong, John H. *True Revival: What Happens When God's Spirit Moves?* Eugene, OR.: Harvest House Publishers, 2001.
- Avant, John and Malcolm McDow, & Alvin Reid, *Revival! The Story of the Current Awakening in Brownwood, Ft. Worth, Wheaton and Beyond* (Nashville:Broadman and Holman, 1996).
- Beardsley, Frank Grenville. *A History of American Revivals*. New York: American Tract Society, 1912.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Religious Progress Through Religious Revivals*. New York: American Tract Society, 1943.
- Bleyer, Willard Grosvenor. *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927.
- Bounds, E. M.. *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1990.
- Bourque, Rick. *Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney: A Comparison of their Theology of Revival*. Th. M. thesis, Western Seminary, 1993.
- Brand, H. W. *Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times*. New York: Doubleday, 2005.

- Bright, Bill. *The Coming Revival: America's Call to Fast, Pray, and "Seek the Face."* Orlando: FL.: New Life Publications, 1995.
- Burdette, Franklin L. ed. *Readings for Republicans* New York: Oceana Publishers, 1960.
- Burns, James. *Revivals: Their Life and leaders.* Grand Rapids, MI., Baker Book House, 1960.
- Cairns, Earle E. *An Endless Line of Splendor: Revivals and Their Leaders from the GreatAwakening to the Present.* Wheaton, IL.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1986.
- Candler, Warren A. *Great Revivals and the Great Republic.* Nashville, TN.: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. 1904
- Carwardine, Richard *Transatlantic Revivalism*, Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Chambers, Talbot W. *Memoir of the life and character of the late Hon. Theo. Frelinghuysen. LL.D.* New York : Harper & Brothers, 1863.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The New York City Noon Day Meeting.* Colorado Springs, CO.: Wagner Publications, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Noon Prayer Meeting of the North Dutch Church, Fulton Street, New York: Its Origin, Character and Progress, with some of the Results.* New York: Board of Publications of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, 1858.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Prayers of a Generation. A Discourse Delivered in the Collegiate Church." (A Discourse presented at the thirtieth anniversary of the Daily Noon Prayer Meetings at the Collegiate Church, New York, New York, 23 September 1887.) available from <http://www.rca.org/aboutus/archives/chambersfulton.pdf>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2005.
- Chiasson, Lloyd, Jr. *Three Centuries of American Media.* Englewood, CO: Morton Publishing Company, 1999.
- Conant, William C. *Narratives of Remarkable Conversions and Revival Incidents.* New York: Derby & Jackson, 1858.
- Craven, Avery. *The Coming of the Civil War.* Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press, 1957.



Crawford, Michael J. *Seasons of Grace: Colonial New England's Revival Tradition in it's British Context*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991

Damazio, Frank. *Seasons of Revival: Understanding the Appointed Times of Spiritual Refreshing*. Portland, OR.: BT Publishing, 1996.

Dieter, Melvin E. *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century*. Lanham, MD.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1996.

Duewel, Wesley. *Mighty Prevailing Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Francis Asbury Press, 1990.

Duewel, Wesley L.. *Revival Fire*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House., 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Revival Fire*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.

Eaton, Clement. *Henry Clay and the Art of American Politics*. Toronto: Little, Brown and Company (Canada) Limited, 1957.

Eastman, Dick. *The Hour that Changes the World*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1978

Emery, Edwin. *The Press and America, an Interpretative History of Journalism*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1962.

Faulkner, Harold Underwood. *American Economic History*. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1943.

Fish, Roy J. *When Heaven Touched Earth: The Awakening of 1858 and Its Effects on the Baptists*. Azle, Texas: Need of the Times Publishers, 1996.

Foner, Eric. *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Genovese, Eugene D. *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy & Society of the Slave South*. London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1965.

Gibbons, J. S. *The Banks of New York, Their Dealers, The Clearing House, and The Panic of 1857*. New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968.  
Reprint from 1859.

Gingrich, Gerald Ira. *Protestant Revival Yesterday and Today: A Historical Study of the Characteristics of Twelve Revival Movements and of their Application in the Mid-Twentieth Century*. New York: Expository Press, 1959.

- Green, Melody and David Hazard. *No Compromise: The Life Story of Keith Green*. Chatsworth. CA.: A Sparrow Press Book, 1989.
- Hall, John, ed. *Forty Years' Familiar Letters of James W. Alexander, D. D. Constituting, With the Notes, A Memoir of his Life*. New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1870.
- Hardman, Keith J. *Seasons of Refreshing: Evangelism and Revivals in America*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 1994.
- Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*, New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Hoffman, Fred W. *Revival Times in America*, Boston: W. A. Wilde Company, 1956
- Holt, Michael F. *The Political Crisis of the 1850s*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978.
- House, Gary K. "The 1858 Prayer Revival: A History and Evaluation of its Impact on New York City." M.A. thesis. , Trinity Evangelical Divinity School., 1988.
- Humphrey, Heman. *Revival Sketches and Manual*. New York: American Tract Society, 1859. accessed 3 March 2005; available from <http://www.hti.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-dx?c=moa;idno=AFZ1028.0001.001>
- Huston, James L. *The Panic of 1857 and the Coming of the Civil War*. Baton Rouge, LA.: Louisiana University Press, 1987.
- Jackson, Samuel Macauley. *The Concise Dictionary of Religious Knowledge and Gazetteer*. New York : The Christian Literature Co., 1889.
- Jacobs, Cindy. *Possessing the Gates of the Enemy*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Chosen Books, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Voice of God: How God Speaks Personally and Corporately to His Children Today*. Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1995.
- Johnson, Paul E. *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978.
- Johnson, Susan Lee. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2000, 58.
- Joseph Jr., Alvin M. *Now That The Buffalo's Gone*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1982.

- Kaiser, Walter C, Jr. *Revive Us Again: Biblical Principles for Revival Today*. Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2003.
- Keese, Timothy, and Mark Sidwell. *United States History for Christian Schools*. Greenville, SC.: Bob Jones University Press, 1993.
- Kirk, Edward Norris. *Lectures on Revival*. Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1875.
- Knight, George R. *Millenial Fever and the End of the World*. Boise, ID.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1993.
- Lacy, Benjamin Rice, Jr. *Revivals in the Midst of Years*. Hopewell, VA: Royal Publishers, Inc., 1968.
- Lanphier, Jeremiah C., *Alone With Jesus: Gleanings for Closet Reading*. New York: N. Tibbals & Son, 1872.
- Lea, Larry. *Could you not Tarry one Hour?* Lake Mary, FL.: Creation House, 1987
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Hearing Ear: Learning to Listen to God*. Altamonte Springs, FL.: Creation House, 1988
- Leacock, Eleanor Burke and Nancy Oestreich Lurie. *North American Indians in Historical Perspective*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, Inc., 1971.
- Long, Kathryn Teresa. *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Lovelace, Richard F. *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal*. Downers Grove, IL.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979
- McDow, Malcolm and Alvin L. Reid. *Firefall: How God Shaped History Through Revivals*. Nashville, TN.: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1997.
- McLoughlin, William G. *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977*. Chicago, IL.: The University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- Miller, Basil. *Prayer Meetings That Made History*. Anderson, IN.: Warner Press, 1938.
- Miller. William. *William Miller's Apology and Defense*. Charlotte, NC.: Adventist Christian Publishers. 2000.

- Moos, Malcolm, *The Republicans: A History of their Party*. New York: Random House, 1956.
- Morrison, Michael A. *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest destiny and the Coming of the Civil War*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997
- Mott, Frank Luther. *American Journalism: A History: 1690-1960*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962.
- Murray, Iain H., *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858*. Carlisle, PA.: Banner of Truth, 2002.
- Nevins, Allan. *Ordeal of the Union: Selected Chapters*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.
- Nichols, Francis D. *Midnight Cry*. Takoma Park, Washington, DC.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1945.
- Nichols, Roy F. *The Stakes of Power*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1961.
- Noble, W. F. P. *1776-1876: A Century of Gospel Work*. Philadelphia, PA.: H. C. Wattts and Co., 1876.
- Orr, J. Edwin. *The Event of the Century*. Wheaton, IL.: International Awakening Press, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Fervent Prayer: The Worldwide Impact of the Great Awakening of 1858*. Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Light of the Nations*. Exeter, Devon, UK.: The Paternoster Press, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Second Evangelical Awakening in America*. London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1952.
- Pacquette, Robert Louis and Louis A. Ferleger, ed. *Slavery, Secession, and Southern History*. Charlottesville, VA.: University of Virginia Press, 2000.
- Payne, George Henry. *History of Journalism in the United States*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1929
- Pletcher, David M. *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War*. Columbia, MO.: University of Missouri Press, 1973.

Porter, E. *Letters on Revival*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Linde Publications, 1992.

Prime, Samuel I. *Fifteen Years of Prayer in the Fulton Street Meeting*. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low, & Seagle, 1872.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Five Years of Prayers with the Answers*. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1864

\_\_\_\_\_. *Prayer and its Answer Illustrated in the First Twenty-Five Years of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Power of Prayer: Illustrated in the Wonderful Displays of Divine Grace at the Fulton Street and Other Meetings*. New York, NY: Scribner, 1858.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Power of Prayer*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998.

[Prime, Samuel Irenæus, ed.]. *The New York Pulpit in the Revival of 1858: A Memorial Volume of Sermons*. New York: Sheldon, Blackman, and Company, 1858.

Prime, Wendall, ed. *Samuel Irenæus Prime: Autobiography and Memorials*. New York: Anson D. F. Rudolph and Company, 1888.

Ritchey, Russell E. *Early American Methodism*. Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Rosell, Garth and Richard A. G. Dupuis, eds. *The Original Memoirs of Charles G. Finney*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 1989.

Royce, Josiah. *California*. Santa Barbara, CA.: Peregrine Publishers, Inc., 1970.

Sanford, Elias Benjamin, ed. *A Concise Cyclopedia of Religious Knowledge: Biblical, Biographical, Geographical, Historical, Practical, and Theological*. Hartford, CT.: The S. S. Scranton Co., 1906.

Sizer, Sandra S. *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth Century Revivalism*. Philadelphia, PA.: Temple University Press, 1978.

Sloan, Wm. David, *Media and Religion in American History*. Northport, AL: Vision Press, 2000.

Smith, Matthew Hale. *Marvels of Prayer: Illustrated by the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting with Leaves from the Tree of Life*. New York: Evangelical Publishing Co, 1875.

- Sprague, William B. *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*. Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1832.
- Stampf, Kenneth M. *America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Sweet, William Warren. *Revivalism in America: Its Origin, Growth, and Decline*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944.
- Tebbel, John. *The Compact History of the American Newspaper*. New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc. 1969.
- Thomas, John L. *Slavery Attacked: The Abolitionist Crusade*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: A Spectrum Book published by Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, 1965.
- Townsend, L. T. *Supernatural Factor in Religious Revival*. Boston: Lee and Shepard, Publishers, 1877.
- Tyndall, Prof., Francis Galton and Others against Dr. Littledale, President McCosh, The Duke of Argyll, Canon Lyddon, and "The Spectator." *The prayer-gauge debate*. Boston, MA.: Congregational Publishing Society, 1876; available from <http://name.umd.umich.edu/AGA3363>; Internet; accessed 27 July 2005.
- Underwood, Doug. *From Yahweh to Yahoo! The Religious Roots of the Secular* Press. Urbana, IL.: University of Illinois Press. 2002.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Breaking Strongholds in Your City*. Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Churches That Pray*. Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Prayer Shield*. Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Warfare Prayer*. Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1992.
- Wagner, C. Peter, ed. *Engaging The Enemy*. Ventura, CA.: Regal Books, 1991.
- Wagner, C. Peter and Pablo Deiros, ed. *The Rising Revival: Firsthand Accounts of the Incredible Argentine Revival-and How it can Spread Throughout the World*. Ventura, CA.: Renew Books, 1998.
- Weisberger, Bernard A. *They Gathered at the River: The Story of the Great Revivalists and Their Impact upon Religion in America*. New York: Quadrangle/ The New York Times Book Co., 1958.

Wells, Evelyn and Harry C. Peterson. *The '49ers*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1949.

Whittaker, Colin. *Great Revivals*. Springfield, MO.: Gospel Publishing House, 1986.

Wiltse, Charles M. *The New Nation*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1961

Winik, Jay. *April 1865: The Month that Saved America*. New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 2001.

Woods, Grace W. (Compiler). *The Half Can Never Be Told*. Atlantic City, NJ.: The World Wide Revival Prayer Movement. 1927.

*Yearbook of the (Collegiate) Reformed Protestant Dutch Church City of New York*. New York: by Authority of the (Collegiate) Reformed Protestant Dutch Church City of New York, 1894.

### **Journals and Periodical**<sup>6</sup>

- “A Business Men’s Prayer Meeting,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (April 1858): 127.
- “The American Religious press on the Late Financial Crisis,” *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*. 81 (January 1858): 47-49.
- “Can We Have a Revival,” *Guide to Holiness*. 31 (January 1857): 12-14.
- “Characteristic Features of the Great Awakening of 1858,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (26 May 1858): 84.
- “Colleges,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (5 May 1858): 72
- “Counting Room Prayer Meetings,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (April 1858): 125.
- “The Event of 1857,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (23 December 1857): 204.
- “The Financial Crisis,” *The New Englander*. 15 (November 1857) 701-715.
- “The Financial Panic,” *Guide to Holiness*. 32 (October 1857): 127-128.
- “The General Revival,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (9 June 1858): 90.
- Graves, Samuel. “The Efficacy of Prayer,” *The Christian Review*. 23 (October 1858): 620-642.
- “Great Power of Revivals,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (5 May 1858): 67.
- “The Great Revival,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (April 1858): 117-120.
- Marvin, A. P. “Three Eras of Revival in the United States,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*. 16 (April 1859): 279-301.
- “Prayer in a Theatre,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (May 1858): 158.
- “Prayer Meetings,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (January 1858): 32.
- “Precious Revivals in College and Schools,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (28 April 1858): 63.
- “The Religious Awakening of 1858,” *The New Englander*. 16 (August 1858) 646-665.

---

<sup>6</sup> The periodicals and journals that the author researched were found in the bibliography of Gary K. House’ thesis.



“Results of the Revival,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (July 1858): 30-31.

“Revival Extraordinary!: The Laity for the Times Exemplified,” *Guide to Holiness*. 32 (December 1857): 32.

“The Revival Increasing,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (21 April 1858): 56.

“Revivals in New York,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (17 May 1858): 24.

“Revival Intelligence,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (September 1858): 96.

“Revival in Williams College,” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (5 May 1858): 67.

“Revival of Religion in the United States,” *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine for 1858*. 81 (June 1858): 501-505.

“The revival,” *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review*. (January 1859) 485-523.

“The Rules and the Spirit of the Great Prayer-Meetings.” *The Oberlin Evangelist*. (24 March 1858): 31.

“Revivals,” *Guide to Holiness*. 33 (February 1858): 63.

### **Newspapers**

*The New York Herald*. February 1858 – December 1859.

*The New York Times*. February 1858 – December 1859.

*The New York Tribune*. February 1858 – December 1859.

### **Unpublished Manuscripts held at the Collegiate Church Archives**

*Minutes of the Missionary Committee of the North Dutch Church*. Special Meeting 17 June 1857. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY.

*Record Book*. 1891. Unpublished MS held in the Collegiate Church Archives, Collegiate Church Corporation, New York, NY.

### **Digitally Preserved Prayer Requests**

*Fulton Street Prayer Meeting Request Album*. Vol 1-3. New York: Collegiate Church Corporation, 2006.

## VITA

Joel Eugene Collier was born in Portland, Oregon on July 20, 1962. He received his call to ministry in September of 1981. In response to his call, he has studied at several institutions. In 1984, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion/Christian Ministries from Warner Pacific College in Portland, Oregon and in 1987, he received a Master of Divinity degree from Anderson School of Theology, Anderson University, in Anderson, Indiana. In addition, his graduate work includes two years at Western Seminary where he studied the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East. His studies for the Doctor of Ministry degree started in 2003, with the first residency in January of 2004. The expected graduation date for this degree is May 19, 2007.

Joel has been in ministry for more than twenty years. He is currently an Associate Pastor of Administration at the Richmond Community Church in Portland Oregon. He should be ordained shortly after graduation.

Joel lives in Portland, Oregon with his wife of 23 years, Glenna, and their three sons, James, Jonathan, and Jeremy. In their free time, Glenna and Joel enjoy watching their sons play baseball, going to Disneyland, visiting Joel's mother on the Oregon Coast, and having their home filled with teenage boys playing Microsoft X-Box. Their home is governed by a feisty feline named "Ruffles" whose job is to keep the rodents out and the rest of the family in line.